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## The Foxes' Case.

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THE following sections are composed of elements from two essays, one of which will shortly appear as a book.

They deal with the Person as hero—personality, itself, regarded as heroism: the conflict between the individual personality and the personality of the crowd, a similar conflict to that between the child and parent; the effect in western countries of the democratic principle on the Person as hero, and his conversion into an anonymous and “impersonal” instrument; and the arrangement by which personal expression is recognised only on condition that it is agreed not to be the expression of a person, and that there is no person, in short, there at all. The hero in Shakespeare is used as an illustration. The impersonal, that is non-responsible and child-like, is shown to be the ideal of the majority of people.

### (I) THE PERSON AND HIS ORIGINS.

The expansiveness that manifests itself in inventive or expressive work of any sort is essentially a movement to multiply the personality. At its intensest, it is not so very far removed from the consciousness of the crowd, for in multiplying itself a crowd is formed. The inventiveness of science does also in a sense approximate to nature and its “impersonality”—new *things* come into being as with other forms of expression new *people* are created. So when we speak of the

person or the personality in this connection, it is not as of an opposite principle to what is sometimes achieved by numbers. It is of a system of relations concentrated in a certain way. If a thousand people could have a child, as two people can have a child, he would be rather like Shakespeare or Newton, or some other great "personality," according to the quality of the crowd: and the crowd precedes, in that sense, the person, although the person is not the crowd. All egalitarian doctrines represent the philosophy of a *childless crowd*. The greatest and most painful responsibility of mankind is its "great men." When people show signs of wishing to evade this responsibility one can be sure that that society to which they belong is in a bad way, and is probably preparing for dissolution.

A crowd that cannot produce a person, as we understand person here, is a poor crowd, then. But even that is better than that particularly futile form of crowd which produces a lot of undersized, half-hearted, shrunken off-springs. The heroic crowd immediately produces a Lenin or a Shakespeare, even if the person so produced contradicts all the principles presiding at its conjunction.

## (2) THE VIRGIN-BIRTH IMPOSED ON CREATIVE THOUGHT BY DEMOCRACY.

Having defined what shall be understood by person here, I will proceed to consider some of the difficulties of the person in his relations with the parent-humanity. His situation is admittedly a very ticklish one: for far from being proud of him, those responsible for him regard him with astonishment and dislike. The writer's case is a very characteristic one. His audience can be regarded as the father of Japheth, he being Japheth, or it is more convenient, perhaps, to regard it as his romance. Tourgueneff called it "six unknown," but it may be any number. Employing the sexual image, for a long time now a peculiar system has prevailed in the relations of the writer and the public. Charged with words, which are his seeds, he hastens along with a view to finding the organism for which they are destined. That is the instinctive, unreflective procedure, rather, of this fertile person. But that would hardly describe the writer as we find him to-day.



It is, perhaps, a bad image for writers in general. There are writers who evulgate themselves with the simplicity of birds, it is true, and seem only anxious to find where at best hand their business can be done, and for them the image would hold : but it would not for another sort who take their secret into the most intricate jungle they can find, protected by every allusive trap and device of language. In this way the writer becomes a fabulous beast to be hunted down and ferretted out ; he appeals to people's sporting instinct. His "meaning" is stalked, his mental habits charted. He is the hunted and not the hunter, in short.

It is true that this feminine procedure must ultimately end in a tumescence in which, run to earth, it is he who takes the initiative, unless he has become gelded by disuse. The Lover-at-bay, he fertilises the pursuer, and not *vice-versa*, as an unenlightened observer of these events would be disposed to expect. He foreshadows in the confusion of this peculiar encounter all that about which there has been so much fuss. With the punctuality of clockwork at length everything springs into place : with a form which (for flying it) he has never properly seen, a whole gallery of subsequent entelechies (who very likely will, in their turn, never have an opportunity of becoming properly acquainted with their mate) are incarnated. At some periods the world, the woman of the piece, imposes this elusiveness on her favourites. The mere sight of the bustling, incontinent figure, with that constant air of being taken short, breathing eggs and smelling of semen, humming "in delay there lies no plenty," and proposing the most unsuitable places, would be found chilling, for all Nature's objurgations to the contrary. The meeting would end in a barren police-court outrage. A kind of free-fight would occur, accompanied by a discharge ; armed with contraceptives, the world would remain triumphantly sterile, and with her mighty female fist hurl the impossible creator back into chaos. Under these conditions that personage is compelled to resort to very different methods. He must be feminine in everything but in fact. This no doubt accounts for a great deal of indirectness in the delivery of words and their accompanying ideas and images.

The more doctrinal forms of impersonality, again, in which the writer takes a leaf out of the book of the man of science,

or sometimes attempts to appropriate the entire volume, owe their origin to the same preoccupations. . . . The creator has at all cost to remain hidden, and his delivery must at all cost be indirect, else there is a flash in the pan.

But all these things end in the same manner, that is, in the same brutal examination of the original seed on the table of a court of law, as a piece of evidence ; the creator is either gloriously acquitted of humbug and rape, and pronounced by posterity a most fertile person, and his methods dignified as acts of necessary violence, or legitimate coyness ; or (under a battery of microscopes) his seed is found wanting, he is branded as an impostor, his effigy is publicly burnt, his books perish, his squirrel-like methods are pronounced an unpardonable bluff, and that is the end of him.

Everyone has observed the encounter between a cat and a dog occurring often as follows. The dog will pretend to be wholly absorbed in tracking something on the ground, which circuitously appears by some accident to lead him to the cat : this preoccupied and detached air is very like what the person to-day, bursting with some natural creative impulse, affects. If avowed the impulse would appear very absurd. " Thus truth can be approached more nearly by various ways," etc., is Kant's formula for the proceeding. To disown any " creative " intention is essential to any effective contemporary creator. To be a mere man-of-fashion, or amateur, scribbling three novels a year as a pastime, or producing parthenogenitically a hundred oil-paintings, is one form that this response to a natural sensitiveness on the part of a mechanical public (naturally averse to the more brutal aspects of reproduction) takes. Or the world's stud-bull, intellectually speaking, must pretend to be a cow ; or at least must disguise his function so much that he could pass for one of the herd, unless carefully examined. That " lady-like " standards in other spheres (and all that anxious fastidiousness that characterises the feminine sensibility when left to itself, or allowed to run riot) should have the power to affect the manners of the purely mental creative act, does not at first sound likely. But if it were your business to scan those activities, you would find that that is so. And the egalitarian infection must also play its part.



In giving away these trade secrets I have no other intention than to stimulate an interest in trade, on the principle of those goods that are advertised by a photograph of a room in the factory where they were produced. Perhaps people should enjoy with less fuss the advantages of their "noble machine": perhaps the fox-like manœuvres of the creative intelligence take us into regions that are insufficiently sunlit; on those lines it is very possible to argue; and you can point to results that lack that grand, nobly defined, expressiveness of an art that is at once divulged, imposing its canons directly on the life around it. But since to-day life has to be humoured, and each act of the creative will has to pretend to rise spontaneously in the body of the world or of the crowd (since the democratic standards of western society as contrasted with the methods of benevolent mastery illustrated elsewhere require that every act of government should appear to be the act of the governed), then, of course, there is nothing for it: the creator has to affect to be one of the herd—the smartest, knowingest herd, naturally.

In the procreation of the intellect there are no sexes, but only numbers. But the Many may roughly be taken to represent the feminine principle. There is one field in which are the cows, and another in which the bull promenades, or that is the natural arrangement. But to-day there is one field only, full of cows, and in one corner a small herd of rather bovine and aggressive-looking cows, not unlike bulls. The bull as an entity has vanished. So, figuratively, we shall soon get back to supposing that the world is replenished by the doctor, who brings children to deserving people in a large bag—the man-of-science would, of course, be the "doctor" in that comedy. In any case it is highly indecorous to say that the individual creates: it is the Many that create parthenogenetically, and their gestation can be observed in the bloated pages of the Press. That is, I think, the correct account of the depersonalisation and feminisation of the creative act as that applies to the productions of the mind. Ectogenetic birth will shortly supercede the present brutal rigmarole of animal love, but the intellect is ahead of the physical world in its procreative arrangements.

## (3) SCIENCE, PURITANISM AND THE FEMININE.

In *Daedalus*, recently published, Prof. Haldane has briefly prophesied the triumph of ectogenesis, placing its experimental realisation in the year 1951. In spite of the fact that he asserts that opposition to these innovations will come from the feeling of the conservative majority that such innovations have an "air of presumption and indecency" (p. 53), it is not really the majority that is in question; and, of course, what is intended in any case, is to stress the essential "indecency" of the present arrangement, and the great decency of the proposed ectogenetic realisation of life. All of which confirms us in the conviction of the essential puritanism and squeamishness of the scientific outlook—the outlook, that is, of the average man of science. The "substitution of the doctor for the priest" is not really, as it would seem to be, in the interest of carnal joys. Science, as a *religion* would be a very austere affair indeed, outdoing all, it is most likely, in its cheerless intolerance. Let us consider, for instance, with Prof. Haldane, the simple act of milking a cow.

"Consider so simple and time-honoured a process as the milking of a cow. The milk, which should have been an intimate and almost sacramental bond between mother and child, is elicited by the deft fingers of a milk-maid, and drunk, cooked, or even allowed to rot into cheese. We have only to imagine ourselves as drinking any of its other secretions, in order to realise the radical indecency of our relation to the cow."

This is in order to show how, if it were proposed to milk a cow electrically, and we protested that that was "indecent," we could be convicted of an age-long indecency in milking it with our hands. But biological inventions are abhorrent to humanity, and they call them "indecent," Prof. Haldane thinks. Yet such inventions, beginning as a perversion and monstrosity, end as a ritual. "Even now surgical cleanliness is developing its rites and its dogmas, which, it may be remarked are accepted most religiously by women" (p. 50).

It is precisely the clinical rites of cleanliness and the growth of a whole network of ordinances, whose administration might be at first in the hands of women, that will probably produce the most intensive ceremonial that has ever been elaborated.



When the clinic becomes the temple, and the white-coated surgeon the officiating priest, men will surpass themselves in cleanliness, spending the day in lustrations.

The puritanic potentialities of science have never been forecast. If it evolves a body of organised rites, and is established as a religion, hierarchically organised, things more than anything else will be done in the name of "decency." The coarse fumes of tobacco and liquors, the consequent tainting of the breath and staining of white fingers and teeth, which is so offensive to many women, will be the first things attended to. A scantling of the immaculate, non-carnal world of the future can be examined on all sides to-day.

Two ideas of freedom are involved in these opposite principles of the mechanical disposal of the detritus of life and the natural disposal of the same. *A philosophy of dirt* (which is a tract which should be added to Messrs. Kegan Paul's series) would oppose nature to art, the ancient or animal world to the non-animal world of science. What we still call "art" is the science of the ancient world—that of nature. Michelangelo, aside from his primitive titanism, would be a suitable hero for such a philosophy, which would dwell on the admirable picture of this ancient master engaging in his yearly change of boots and nether garments, which never quitted his body except to make way for a new outfit. We are told that when he pulled them off the skin used to come away with them. His colossal prophetic images, and scenes of the first creation, and his rough personal habits, would provide the requisite background for that thought that gave its preference to the natural. It would be contrasted with the world of the microscope, and the minutiae and tidiness that has been a preserve conventionally of the feminine. That squeamishness (suggesting, physiologically, a bad conscience) of the woman, always heading to some ascetic ritual of orderly automatism, would be there opposing the animal *sans-gêne* of the workman of the early world.

"Surgical cleanliness . . . developing its rites" is "most religiously accepted by women." The liaison between the woman and applied science is as evident as the ascetic tendencies of science, and the puritanic standards that must ensue as its organisation grows. It is science that will lay by the heels the last descendants of the "colossal, impetuous,

adventurous wanderer" of the early world, as well as the *animally-working* pre-industrial man, substituting the machine, of far greater power than any animal or "titan," controlled by some creature, ectogenetically produced, with a small beardless shaven head, very fussy about specks of dust and dirt, very partial to "cosmic" studies, bitterly resenting anything indecorous, with most of the beliefs and innocence of the nursery, a highly organised, shrewd, androgynous Peter Pan. That is the logical forecast from the tendency of the moment. But, of course, so many things may interfere with this that there is as much chance of its not reaching its goal as of its doing so. As the object of the present essay is to contribute something to an analysis of what is occurring around us, and not to be a polemic of the future, our object is achieved if this tendency has been properly seized in this brief analysis.

## 4.—THE STRATEGY OF DEFEAT.

We will now review a few of the stratagems that have been so successfully employed in disciplining and mechanising our society. It will be found that the same indirectness that characterises the creative artist characterises, and for the same reasons, the Western legislator. His anonymity is even more noticeable than that of the man of science or the artist. But the community, on its side, takes its measures, also, to efface itself, in order to frustrate some of his more "creative" intentions. So, in one sense, in these half-revolutionised countries, unblest with an open dictator, a game of hide and seek is continually in progress.

To-day nothing but the humblest instrument appears in a role of evident authority. No better figure could be found to express the high-water-mark of worldly stratagem than the Black Pope, the general of the Jesuits. But the flight from authority and its too explicit emblems is not confined to those actually possessing power to-day, but is universal. Everyone is in flight from its proscribed evidences.

Both the woman's frock and the priest's are disarming symbols. They guarantee immunity up to a point; they are an armour from beneath whose cover a great deal of power may be exercised. When the woman is persuaded to lay



this aside, she is being influenced with the promise of freedom and power. But at the same time, with even more effect, the man who is adopting what she has discarded can be informed, under the breath, of the advantages concealed beneath this emblem of inferiority. Renunciation of sex, and its hollow and onerous privileges, is not the unlikeliest road to a relatively free human condition.

All these traditional haunts and devices of the defeated are seductively shown in contemporary propaganda as blessed retreats from the stress and strain of life. Why desire authority, or obvious power? it is asked. Why care about this or that object of your former pride and ambition? Why not take a leaf out of the woman's book? the man is asked. She (the woman) sits snug and "receptive." Blessed is he who gives and blessed he who receives. She has everything done for her, at a price, of course; but there must be a price for everything, and she has the best bargain! So the militant period of feminism has been followed by a widespread propaganda of the feminine ideal. This propaganda has been supported by faked historical pictures of primitive matriarchates. The rigid transference of every value into a social value has ensued. For the social world is, of course, a feminine world.

The vast process of feminisation which is occurring in Europe and America is, of course, one of the chief signs of the defeat of the white male, and is a result of the distress of all our characteristic institutions and ambitions. It is, unless the achievements of the European dazzle you (especially in natural science) not a thing to be deeply regretted, but the more tractable material that results should make a world unification more easy to effect.

To turn women into men will not help them, of course, but only increase the labour power robbed by the family unit. But to turn men into women is a master stroke. No political resistance need be feared, as no intellectual life independent of the intense socialism of obsessional sex can be expected, from populations of *exoleti* and their mournful patrons. In a recent number of the *Querschnitt* there were photographs of the Dutch army manœuvres. But all the troops were *naked*. That was symbolical of the magical effects of such a cult, and its military consequences.

The whole of primitive life was overshadowed for man by the thought of attack while engaged in love-making or evacuation. For that was the ideal moment for an enemy, and in that position men knew they were as defenceless as a baby. If on a similar principle you can concentrate the mind of a generation on the obsessing functions of specialised sexual delight, converting all the men into women, only into women *plus féministe que la femme*, you have that society at your mercy. Nothing can penetrate this obsessional atmosphere. A consecutive conversation with an indoctrinated paederast, even more than with a congenital one, is as difficult as a conversation with a madman who conceives himself to be some beautiful historic princess, or, for that matter, with a recent convert to the Roman Church. A veil of conventional mystery is let down around the mind; the individual is isolated, for all who do not share his madness, in a world of his own. If any notion from without succeeds in penetrating it, it is at once related to this central and obsessing reality, which is usually also a shy and troubled one. For exterior and general action in a varied, not necessarily "social," world, this type of man is fundamentally unapt. For it is as though a person with a toothache, or under the influence of a drug, attempted to attend to and take seriously some pressing affair on which his success or the reverse in his business life depended. The obsessional handicap would most likely be complete. His mind would be unable to treat this more distant eventuality as "important," all its energies occupied with an intense and absorbing centralised sensation.

So encouraged to effect a sex-transformation, both men and women, they will eventually be stilled probably into quiescence and receptivity. For european society this will be death. But for the world at large it will be a welcome relief. All the brutal sting and kick of the "northern male," the "blonde beast" of Nietzschean myth, also all his stupidity, is being surgically treated. Eventually Europe will be as placid as a doctored cat. All the dogmatic partizans of ACTION at all cost, so prone in the past to fill the world with a fretful and disordered "life," will be quieted at last by the application of this sovereign strategy—the Strategy of Defeat. It will prevent them from swallowing the revolutionary humbug the



wrong way and choking. The divine Cow of the dawn of history, supplying its vulva-shape to the symbolism of cowrie-shells, will once more fill the world with its stagnation.

For the decay of the Female idea, or convention, is undoubtedly what has spoilt us. When we say "feminine" to-day we mean the active-feminine. That is a terrible bastard force that uses up *on itself* all the milk supplies of the community. It is the Great Mother drinking all her milk herself, which is a blood-curdling thing to contemplate. We want that GREAT COW back at all costs.

But while we are saying this—that people should be weaned from this futile obsession of ACTION, that they should no longer wish to play at being what they are not, nor can ever be, but should return to compose spiritually with their numbers the bulk of the great original cow-god, behold it is already being done. For if there is a movement setting towards the mad dream of a universal cultural Utopia, bristling with bright little pampered egotisms, a counter-movement deeply impregnated with the full strength of the *strategy of defeat* is setting in the other direction. To-day it is strategy; to-morrow it will be peace. But it would indeed be ridiculous to mistake *strategy* for *truth*.

## 5.—THE MAN OF THE WORLD.

The Man of the World is a convenient way of describing another figure to be placed beside the jesuit and the woman and the *shamanised* man. He certainly comes within the influence of the strategy of defeat, or psychology of the fox, and is one of its most remarkable exponents.

The Man of the World is even the abstract incarnation of this strategy. He may perhaps be regarded as active mankind organised for defeat. He is mankind playing for safety: he is mankind hardening and mechanising himself *in order not to feel* and in order to avoid suffering. He is also mankind, as opposed to womankind, taking many wrinkles from the subject sex, learning its cowed and cynical duplicity, in order to survive.

The strategy of defeat has for its arch exponent the Man of the World, whose pedigree is longer than is supposed. There was undoubtedly a primitive strategist who on the

termination of the first generation of men on the earth made up his accounts, reckoned his chances, put to himself something like Kant's three questions : *What can we know ? What should we do ? What can we hope ?* and came to the unpleasant conclusion : namely of course NOTHING.

But the peculiarity of the Man of the World is that instead of resorting to suicide or taking the humble road to the Great Cow, he remains to this day immersed in strategy in the centre of the picture. And he is in that sense not the purest exponent of the strategy of defeat ; for in admitting his defeat he *sotto voce* resolves to actively deal in and share all the benefits of humiliation. He sits on the fence of being and non-being.

First and foremost he is not an agent, he is an amateur strategist ; he would (and we must follow him) insist very much on that. His dilettantism is as native with him as his feminineness. He is a mixed type, and can be analysed into others which when found in their full purity are much too intense to be strictly "worldly."

At the heart of the strategy of defeat, then, as a general system this "worldly" man would probably be discovered : for the great figures of abnegation are much less purely defeatist than is he—the woman, the shaman (the famous sub-arctic invert priest) and the jesuit, for instance. Yet when this strategy has to be matched with its opposite, it is not he that is chosen to be its champion, naturally enough, for with many a Thank you ! he would hurry deeper into his labyrinth if approached to play the part of a champion—even of defeat !

## 6.—THE HERO AND HIS ADVERSARY IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS.

The great figure of human heroism, in such a match, could be found, I should say, in its fullest flower in the works of Shakespeare (who was himself, of course, a *shamanised* man, which makes his creation of these colossal figures particularly curious). The Antony of *Antony and Cleopatra*, or Coriolanus, Timon, Othello, or Lear : all these great heroic children, who compass their *pathos* with such a pathetic magnificence, are the ideal saga-types. The modernity of the language, and the extreme subtlety of their creator, makes them more acceptable and more real to us than the great figures of what Prof. Chadwick has called The Heroic Age.



Shakespeare's tremendous heroes in their histories likewise answer in every respect to the requirements of this contest. They are struck down always by the puniest weapons : always by deceit, but quite ordinary deceit. For Iago, for instance, is not the unusual villain that he is often made out to be. He is a quite normal and commonplace "worldly" character. With a little more intensity and resolution, most of the individuals composing any contemporary European "educated" society would be very much like Iago. The tremendous intricacy of Shakespeare's art is well shown in this treatment of Iago. The making of this villain-Everyman is a supreme invention of genius. He is just the ordinary bluff, "honest" man-in-the-street, proud of his "strategy," and the "power" it gives him ; saying, without any self-consciousness (pity almost coming to join with his envy) :

The Moor is of a free and open nature  
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so :  
And will as tenderly be led by the nose  
As asses are.

Iago is strictly the Man of the World, with so much purpose and energy added as is required to be the David to Othello's Goliath. The *small* destroyer, the eternal Charlie Chaplin figure of human myth, the gods on his side, their instrument in their struggle with the hero. He is the ideal *little man*, with the sling and the stone. Othello is the ideal human galleon, twenty storeys high, with his head in the clouds, that the little pebble can vanquish. The great spectacular, pugnacious, "male" ideal is represented perfectly by Othello ; who was led out to the slaughter on the Elizabethan stage just as the bull is thrust into the spanish bull-ring.

There is nothing that Iago says, in the displays of his mental workings with which we are accommodated, that would be inappropriate in the mouth of any solicitor, stockbroker, politician, or man-about-town in England to-day, or for the last four hundred years. He possesses the same pride in his *cunning*—and tells you with a wink that *his* thoughts are not worn on his sleeve, but in a *deep* and secret place, where they cannot easily be found. There is something at once commonplace and maniacal, "normal" and mad, about the way he speaks of his hiding-place—his mind.

## THE CALENDAR

For when my outward action doth demonstrate  
The native act and figure of my heart  
In compliment extern, 'tis not long after  
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve  
For daws to peck at : I am not what I am.

The last words are the supreme bombast of such people : *I am not what I am*. The small and shoddy, when it meets its kind, knows it at once by this sign : namely, *that it is not what it is*. Both are the votaries of the goddess whose oracle these words convey. Shakespeare's own words—*I am that I am*—where in his sonnets, through all the veils of his beautiful rhetoric, he is, as Wordsworth said, “unlocking his heart”—are similarly the supreme defiance of the rarest nature, for ever over against the dark equivocal crowds, saturated with falsity.

When Robert Browning denied that Shakespeare was capable of such an action as “unlocking his heart” (as Wordsworth said that he had), he classed himself with more nicety than he knew. The romantically machiavellian and “detached” “*Robert Browning you writer of plays*,” as he calls himself, wished for a greater Iago as an idol. Impersonality, in Shakespeare's time, had not the *rationale* we have shown it to possess to-day. But at all times an absence of personality has been appreciated, and taken as a compliment by everybody.

Iago, the *taurobulus*, then, of this sacrificial bull, the little David of this Goliath, or the little feat gilded espada, is for Shakespeare nothing but *Everyman*, the Judas of the *World*, the representative of the crowds around the crucifix, or of the ferocious crowds at the Corrida, or of the still more abject roman crowds at the mortuary games. Othello is of the race of Christs, or of the race of “bulls ; he is the hero with all the magnificent helplessness of the animal, or all the beauty and ultimate resignation of the god. From the moment he arrives on the scene of his execution, or when his execution is being prepared, he speaks with an unmatched grandeur and beauty. To the “troop” that is come to look for him, armed and snarling, he says, “Put up your bright swords or the dew will rust them.” And when at last he has been brought to bay, he dies by that significant contrivance of remembering how he had defended the state when it was traduced, and in reviving this distant blow for his own demise. The great words roll on in your ears as the curtain falls :

“And say besides, that in Aleppo once . . . ”



In its place we shall consider how the particular *Everyman* presented in Iago was influenced by his great spokesman, Machiavelli. The whole of the elizabethan literature is under the sway of this great figure. But we do not need the machiavellian obsession to account for what is essential in Iago : the bluff, commonplace, quite unvillain-like, ordinary little Man of the World, would provide us with the full material for him. Bossola is a complicated "renaissance figure" : but Iago is so great a creation because he is not that at all, but just the man-in-the-street of any time or place since the emergence of *Homo Sapiens* on our scene.

If, then, you were matching Othello (or, perhaps, because of the historic reference, and the magnificence of the traditional setting, the Antony of *Antony and Cleopatra* would be better) where would you find your champion ? Ulysses is a great myth traditionally representing "the World." But his cunning is almost heroic ; and there would be the same objections to him, on those grounds, as to the jesuit. Yet (since in a sense they are real champions) it would probably be Ulysses, the jesuit, or the shaman that you would choose. (The matching of a woman and a man is too unnatural.) You would not get the David-Goliath contrast in stature : but you would get a more exciting spectacle. The pathos of the "little pin" and the "good-bye king," the meanness of the instrument used to destroy all greatness, is perhaps too intense, in principle, for artistic expression.

## 7.—THE TRANSFORMED SHAMAN.

For those not familiar with the phenomenon of shamanism still universally prevalent among the sub-arctic tribes, I will give a brief account of that practice. It consists generally in the reversal of sex ; a man feeling himself unsuited for his sex, dresses himself as a woman, behaves as a woman (usually adopting the woman's role also where some man is concerned) ; or by means of this sexual abnegation prepares himself for the duties of a magician. Women similarly, though more rarely, abandon the outward attributes of sex and become men. (This is more rare because it is obviously a less attractive proposition.) This does not take with it properly an enhancement of the powers of "mystery" as the other transformation does.

Generally speaking, the process of *shamanising* himself confers on a man the feminine advantages. It signifies either a desire to experience the sensual delights peculiar to the female organism, or else an ambition to identify himself with occult powers. But it is further a withdrawal from masculine responsibilities in every sense, and an adoption of the spectator's role of the woman (freed further in his case from the cares of motherhood.)

That this is a very radical and even inversely heroic, or heroically inverse, proceeding, is evident. Also there is nothing in the Man of the World that exactly corresponds to this, except that, like the shaman, as it is his strategy to include among his numerous advantages those possessed by the woman, he has a tincture of the shaman in him. Hotspur (one of Shakespeare's lesser "heroes") tells in a famous speech how he meets on the battlefield a feminine sprig of nobility, whom he describes as chiding soldiers carrying a dead body near him "for bringing a slovenly unhandsome corpse betwixt the wind and his nobility." This exquisite was not necessarily a wholly *shamanised* man, but possibly only a Macaroni of the time. He would in that case be a Man of the World of a very extravagant type, very heavily unsexed. He would have on the field of battle all the privileges of a woman, only frowned at, and perhaps hustled, by the blustering Percy.

To turn to another component of the Man of the World (also well mixed in and not too heroically prominent), the sense of humour provides us with an especially *english* or anglo-saxon attribute of worldliness. In Falstaff, Shakespeare has given us a very interesting specimen indeed of consummate wordliness, with a very powerfully developed humorous proclivity, which served him better than any suit of armour could in the various vicissitudes of his life. It is an excellent substitute even for a *shamanising* faculty, and enables its possessor to escape the inconveniences and conventional disgrace of being "feminine," while at the same time providing him with most of the woman's social advantages.—The sense of humour is from that point of view the masterpiece of worldly duplicity and strategy.

On the field of battle at Shrewsbury, Falstaff avails himself of it in a famous scene, and gives us a classical exhibition of



its many advantages, and the graceful operation of its deceit. It does not cut off its practitioner from "men" of the rough "hero" type, but, on the contrary, endears him to them. With it Falstaff was as *safe* on the battlefield as the *shamanised* noble noticed by Percy Hotspur. The analogy of these rôles to that of the woman is obvious: it is unnecessary here to qualify our use of the term "feminine," or to go into the question of the secondary nature of sex differentiation for the same reason.

The Man of the World is even indebted to some extent to the *child*. For it is partly as a child, in the sense of a not fully responsible person, that he arranges his excuses when bettered by circumstances. Also his parade of knowingness and the cynical virtues is all the better for a pinch of naivety.

That the artist is laid under contribution also is a constant source of embarrassment to that much imitated individual. He is incessantly surprising the Man of the World dressed up in one of his (the artist's) best suits, much admired by all his friends for his taste and discrimination—though usually worn the wrong way round or upside-down. For he is a sort of magpie where ideas are concerned; and he refers with some glee to these activities as the process known as "picking So-and-so's brains." When the artist feels his brains being pecked at he shakes his head like a horse responding to the attentions of a horse-fly. But like the horse with the fly, like the farmer with the fox, or the householder with the rat or mouse, there is not very much to be done, except whirlwind gallops or poisoned bait.

Many Men of the World have reached us from the past disguised as writers; though to place against that, it is true, many literary geniuses have also survived disguised as Men of the World—possibly for that reason. Congreve, in consequence of this, was so beside himself when his disguise was penetrated, that he came very near expelling Voltaire from his lodgings on the spot for using so little ceremony with his favourite strategy.

The Man of the World may be regarded, then, as the arch-exponent of the philosophy of defeat—the king of foxes. He is a compendium of expedients for evading distant and troublesome issues; he is armed from head to foot (when a very

complete Man of the World) with inertia. What Christ was to the poor and miserable, he is to the *lazy*. His traditional enemies are the priest, the "high-brow," the "hero," and the "artist"; to circumvent whom he expends as much energy as it is consistent with a Man of the World to expend (and often rather more). But the form his hostility takes is usually the passive one of constantly interposing in the path of these enemies his redoubtable inertia. When he has temporarily reduced one or other to silence or surrender, he steps smartly into their place, and with his ape-like and child-like characteristics, sets himself to discharge their functions. Those that he finds too difficult he affects to forget or turns into ridicule. Should the original of his amateur display survive, he retreats quickly into the fastnesses of the World, whence he carries on a guerilla warfare, waiting his opportunity.

His is the art of the amateur; all his art is there, and that is his secret. He is the survivor of an older species. He is the *first man* who thought, not wisely but too well; and confronted with the alternative of suicide or a consciously abject life, chose the latter. He is the element that must exist in every species; those who have surveyed the route already traversed, have looked forward to the infinitely distant goal, and said no more! But above all he is a type that nature has marked down for death: he knows it, and he is a defaulter to this decree. He is the most real illustration of Darwinian survival, not by means of "fitness," but by strategy; and above all of bare *survival*, and of constant adaption to environment—nothing more.

He was intended by cruel nature to die—but he knew a trick worth two of that. He built up his labyrinth, which is usually termed civilisation, in which he buries himself deeper away from nature every day: and between nature and this delinquent the hardier of the species find their life converted into a kind of blind-man's-buff.

That labyrinth is "the World"; and it is part of our task to chart it a little. But as to-day the Man of the World is freely venturing out of his labyrinth, and has become reckless from impunity, we may be spared this toponymical and graphical labour, and surprise him on some neutral ground.

## Poems

By LAURA RIDING GOTTSCHALK.

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### As Well as Any Other.

As well as any other, Erato,  
I can dwell separately on what men know  
    In common secrecy,  
And celebrate the old, adoréd rose,  
Re-tell—oh why—how similarly grows  
    The last leaf of the tree.

But for familiar sense what need can be  
Of my most singular survey or me,  
    If homage may be done  
(Unless it is agreed we shall not break  
The patent silence just for singing's sake)  
    As well by anyone ?

Reject me not, then, if I have begun  
Unwontedly or if I seem to shun  
    The close and well-tilled ground ;  
For in untravelled soil alone can I  
Unearth the gem or let the mystery lie  
    That never must be found.

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### The Higher Order.

From man to maggot, each can see.  
But to be blind the way of a tree,  
Closed, corked up properly—

Man has more holes in him than any, and one great spout,  
His spurting mouth, where all the good goes out  
And flies sip whereabouts.



## THE CALENDAR

And nothing good comes in. And he cannot  
Improve or stay the rot  
By punching eyeholes in a shattered pot.

Soon the last webs of riddled clay  
Crumble, the essence leaks away.  
Death gathers the decay.

And the disintegration bears the honoured name  
Of mind. The heart that drills receives the same  
Homage of character. Man lays the blame

Of agony on death, pardons the pain,  
Forgets how trees attain  
Death intactly and unslain,

Since death is sense and sense the thrust  
Of violation in the quiet crust  
That guards the dust.

There is no mending. The habits of this wisdom break  
The vessel and expose the dregs we make  
Of the dark restless fluid we mistake

For wine to spill, but is the very blood  
Of peace we should  
Preserve each drop, to grow and wither like the green wood.

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## The Contraband.

The old feet will never find pavements in the sky.  
The new-found wings cannot etherealize earth's solid dust.  
Invention but confirms the natural habit  
And man's miracles obstruct the perfect paradox.

Otherwise, faith, that is not mechanical,  
 Might be the New Destroyer,  
 Set sunshine upon the throne of thunder,  
 Teach the topsy-turvy feet to kick the earth away,  
 Doubt the pedestrian deduction  
 And believe in the promenades of air  
 In spite of all appearances.

Life, then, like feet may profit from this philosophy,  
 Discover the free will,  
 Count death not necessarily logical  
 But one choice out of many,  
 Lick death from under it, ungravitational . . .  
 Something will whirl in to tread upon  
 As long as legs and life know how  
 To love and brave freedom and faith under them.

So Christ conquered and calmed the sea.  
 This is not idle and a comedy.  
 If death takes the hands of all those sinking Peters,  
 It is no fault of Christ or any other successful immortal,  
 But of the fixed fright that will not walk the waters,  
 And of the faint foot glued to an adhering world.  
 The clinging is of the foot only.

I have no doubt  
 The theory of death can be thwarted by theory,  
 And the poetical proof is good enough for me  
 As it has been for all my ancestral arguers.  
 We settle this difficult subject satisfactorily,  
 Believe every word we sing,  
 Insist that eternity is not impossible  
 And, preoccupied with paradox,  
 Smuggle a little forbidden beauty into the pale of being . . .  
 And, who knows ?  
 Perhaps it is the very magic that contrives the trick !

## Organs of Sense.

### *Body's Head.*

Separate and silk,  
 A scarf unwoven,  
 Thin enough to strain the sun,  
 Thick enough to keep a little of it,  
 A little less brown than the earth would be  
 If rain changed from silver to gold—  
 Lean out anxiously over my forehead,  
 Trembling and giddy and falling  
 At the top of skyscraper me.  
 Cluster and curl at my neck,  
 Conched and translucent mesh,  
 So timorous and yet travel-intentioned,  
 Tentatively adventuring on my neck and ears,  
 Or lightly pawing my cheek  
 Like a tenuous sea-creature,  
 Affectionate and shy.

As if threaded through my body  
 And drawn out fine,  
 Here are the strands of my wind-loom,  
 Here is my torch to flicker and grow pale  
 But burn while it may,  
 Flame dimly down the tufted flesh,  
 Hair, hair, hair,  
 Furry and fingery cascade of all my body,  
 My body a bed under its ripple.

### *Head Itself.*

If it were set anywhere else but so,  
 Rolling in its private exact socket  
 Like the sun set in a joint on a mountain,  
 I think I should not love it half as much.  
 But here, waving and blowing on my neck,  
 Of no particular kind of shape or geometry,  
 Its own original,  
 Flying my hair like a field of corn-silk  
 Tangled on the neglected side of a hill,



My head is at the top of me  
 Where I live mostly and most of the time,  
 Where my face turns an inner courage  
 Towards what's outside of me  
 And meets the challenge of difference in other things  
 Bravely, minutely,  
 By being what it is.

From my head,  
 From this place of high preferment,  
 Font of the larger, lazy continent just under it,  
 I, the idol of the head,  
 An autocrat sitting with my purposes crossed under me,  
 Watch and worry amusedly over the rest,  
 Send all the streams of sense running down  
 To explore the savage, half-awakened land,  
 Tremendous continent of this tiny isle,  
 And civilize it as well as it can.

*Forehead.*

Wide and lonely ribbon,  
 Intrepid band stretched between temple and temple,  
 Last outpost of the intelligence  
 And white barrier between my knowing world  
 And what I cannot understand,  
 Reared like a cliff of chalk,  
 A place of rampart from without,  
 Stupidly, obstinately wise,  
 And from within a wall  
 For my most desperate, daring thoughts  
 To dash their heads against—  
 This is the desert space of my face.  
 What frowning, grave signs of discontent break over it,  
 What waves of self-attack pass like the wind on wheat,  
 Save for a few forgivable wrinkles,  
 The far wear of the mind through bone and flesh,  
 My forehead is ever  
 The same, smooth, impregnable belt of little logic  
 Neatly binding my thoughts together,  
 The real, proper stay of my fancy.

## THE CALENDAR

This is the desert space of my face,  
Wide and lonely and impassible,  
Except when a shadow of sorrow  
Darts across it furtively like a hunted deer  
And hides in the hair  
And turns it grey.

### *Eyes.*

Imagine two clouds shot together by the sunset,  
One river-blue,  
One like a white cloth passed through a purple wine,  
Dripping and deliciously soaked  
And faintly dyed, as if the wine had wiped its fingers on it ;  
Imagine these clouds shot together by the sunset  
Whirling centrifugally away toward the night  
And later halved and rounded by the moon,  
Rolled like blue butter-balls  
In the palms of the moon's hands  
And rimmed elliptically with almost white moon-stuff,  
The moon's particular godmother gift.  
Some such nearly impossible vision like this  
Is necessary for the mood of my eyes.

Formally announced by my eyebrows,  
(Vanguard of my head's hair  
Doing this sweet double duty :  
Yearning across the waste of my forehead to the home-hair  
And yet bowing the mere bend of required courtesy,  
Sad squires of my eyes) ;  
Preciously fitted into two fine skin purses  
Fashioned expressly for them,  
Favourite gewgaw marbles of a boy's pockets,  
Never to be lost,  
Always answering the anxious finger-feel,  
So firmly, gently guarded,  
Yet so free to roll a little  
In each socket,  
In each pocket ;  
Attended by the drawn regiments of my lashes,  
These my head's hair's farthest fallen,

## POEMS

Wayward strayed for the love of my eyes,  
Lost sons of my eyebrows,  
With only a runaway's last inheritance  
Of an upward-tilting, homeward memory of curl :  
Lifting the final rite of this ceremony of presentation,  
Behold my mystic eyes.

With only the drawn, impersonal white satin of the balls  
To be confessor to their more-than-eye ambitions ;  
Though measuring each from loop-tip to loop-tip  
Only a little more than the widest reach of the lifted lid  
For the unattainable round—  
Two rose petals might cover them ;  
Though involved and hampered internally  
In a perfect eye-mechanism ;  
My eyes achieve the many miracles of generality.

Sight is their soul of charity.  
When the feet are tired,  
When joy is caught in the full throat,  
Sight is the good Samaritan,  
Wandering to the last horizon  
Or staying at home to laugh in joy's place.  
Though the trouble be none of its own,  
When grief comes like a beggar to my eyelids,  
Sight throws it pennies,  
Sight throws it tears,  
Though for the minute it rob itself,  
Though for the minute it blind itself.

Exegetes of the tongue,  
Love's best inquirers,  
And courteous heralds of hate,  
Yet meanwhile not despising  
The immediate service of seeing  
Or the darling self-denial of sleep  
To rest me, to rest me—  
My eyes, my eyes,  
Patrons of light and dark !



## THE CALENDAR

Busy, ever busy,  
If I have no other errand for it,  
Yet sight keeps turning the looking machine,  
Always sitting quietly aside,  
The self-appointed and voluntary philosopher of me,  
My ironic interpreter of things,  
Smiling behind the bodily ruse  
Of my amused, amused eyes.

Or, if the eyes fail,  
If the optical bodies of sight die,  
Sight still lives while I live,  
Sight is immortal in me,  
Free of the bond of outward vision,  
The inner sense of life,  
The living looking.  
Death is the only blindness.

### *Nose.*

If I could resist the humorous temptation,  
The wry inducement  
Of the follow-your-nose thought,  
I might deal with anatomy and arrangement only  
And forego the privilege of my subject.  
But humour is the truth a little giddy  
From being obvious,  
Hilarious in the acknowledgment.  
I cannot confront my nose with a lie.  
Gravity would make one of us laugh.  
So let me introduce my nose derisively  
Or be derisively introduced by it.

Emphasizing what's ahead of me,  
Little leader of the march beyond  
And accent of advance,  
I can forgive you almost everything you are  
(My unbeautiful)  
For pointing the ways my toes turn,  
In the path of the possible.

Whatever fair guiding angel you might have been  
 On the back of my head,  
 However more lovely and importunate,  
 Yet, I could never follow you, as I do now,  
 Foremost faith of mine,  
 Beckoning to no backward, will-o'-the-wisp road,  
 But promising me at least  
 The sure, practical inch-by-inch gain  
 Of the under-my-nose ground  
 And obliging me to keep your own promise.

If there were yet anything unforgiven,  
 I must remember only what my nose yet is :  
 My hound of scent,  
 The first of beauty's pack,  
 Driven ahead to hunt the sweetest,  
 Fetching the food of life as well as beauty,  
 Bearing the utmost penalty of usefulness—  
 To be less fair than it might have been  
 With nothing to do  
 (Faithful unbeautiful).

For this unavoidable intrusion  
 Make the same excuse  
 As my face does.

*Ears.*

Misers for my sake only,  
 My cups of avarice  
 Held out to catch the rains of sound  
 Hurrying the swollen rivers  
 Over the bedded corrugation of their bowls  
 Into the inland sea,  
 Into the quiet inland sea  
 Where I sit watching the waters rise  
 And the shore creep back to me—  
 If they might be shattered in the wind  
 And broken beneath the rain,  
 Giving it up, like the air, to itself again,  
 How I might sit here happily by a low, deep sea,

My own miser,  
 Picking over, picking over  
 The old alluvial memory of these high tides  
 For a few singing shells  
 To take away with me  
 When I go.

## *Mouth.*

This might be a seal set on me,  
 The last kiss of whatever made me,  
 Red and warm and shaped to remember  
 That first impression of finality.  
 Here is my open court.  
 What would feed me,  
 What would be beloved,  
 The last breath rushing to leave me,  
 All must pass the ultimate test of this.  
 The little words go stumbling over the sill. . . .  
 And laughter tumbles out  
 Upon the inaugural somersault of a smile.  
 Sorrow taps gently here for admission . . .  
 To be broken again and ever again  
 And to be thus eternized  
 Through the remorseless thrust of each fresh violation  
 Of what had been most securely death,  
 This might be a seal set on me  
 Just for this.

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# A Note on the Ballet.

By LEONIDE MASSINE.

ONE of the chief problems with which the creator of a ballet is faced, is undoubtedly that of achieving harmony between the three elements—music, choreography and décor, of which it is composed. If, for the sake of example, I take a portrait, it is easy to determine after a certain analysis that there are three elements equivalent to those in a ballet—that is to say design, expression and colour. Each of these, of which the latter has the double function of giving form to the design and providing the necessary background, is of the same value in the total effect of the picture. Thus if any of them play a preponderant part, those of the other two must be subordinated in order to maintain the unity of creation ; and the same thing is true of ballet.

It should be easy to find the equilibrium, but it is here that the mistake usually occurs. The three artists, at the very beginning of creation, are convinced that they have an individual and distinct thing to do, and besides this capital misunderstanding they have no idea of each other's craft, making their own contribution too complicated and so disturbing the harmony. Painting has the advantage of being the work of one person, but when three artists of different talent, temperament and knowledge are working together it becomes very difficult for them to do so in unison. It often happens that the synopsis of a ballet, equivalent to the expression in a portrait, would be better adapted to any other art than choreography, and a production in which the story has not been carefully and thoroughly analysed, is bound to fail, for it is in the choice of a suitable *moyen de réalisation* that the secret lies.

Now in order to achieve the unity of which I have spoken, I see that the three components must be regulated by laws as strict as those of counterpoint, the essential part of which is the determination by bars, phrases and movements, of the different rhythmic values in certain lengths of time. With regard to décor the act is the equivalent of the movement, and the unchanging background must contain the germ of the contrapuntal relationship which exists between scenery and

costumes. The scene itself being invariable throughout the movement (or act), the costumes must have the equivalence of melody, in so far as colour contributes to the total rhythmic effect. Therefore the appearance of the costumes either separately or grouped, moving or at rest, must be controlled with the same care as a melody is made to appear and disappear in the course of a symphony. By showing two or more costumes together in a false harmony, an impression of colour is given which is just as unsatisfactory as a discord. Or again, if one group of costumes is allowed to remain for too long the balance of the décor is upset and the group itself becomes monotonous.

In the case of the music for a ballet, it must depend on the construction of the whole piece and may carry any conception of time and rhythm. If there are to be several scenes it would most suitably follow the development of a symphony. The plot, however, should on no account directly influence its construction but should be taken as a guide in suggesting time and rhythm. I do not say more about the part to be played by music itself since it is an art more widely considered and more definitely understood than the others.

As to choreography : with a theory as strict as painting or music though as yet undiscovered, it will be most easily treated of in terms of music. As with the music the same care must be shown in the treatment of the plot or synopsis. The aim of the choreographer is not to invent an indefinite number of steps—either to follow the development of the plot, or as sometimes suggested by the music—but to create a unity of all the bodies moving or stationary, and to invent new designs with the lines of the body to fill the space on which he has determined beforehand.

I attach particular importance to the proportion of the body to the stage, for when a figure appears, filling a certain space, any movement which it makes on the stage is nothing more than a continuation of a movement of the body itself. Directly a figure enters it creates an interval between the sides of the stage in depth and width, so that the choreographer, before starting to move a body, must fully realise its real value when stationary. The effect of a body moving in the depth of the stage is comparable to the transition of a voice from the

## A NOTE ON THE BALLET

high to low register. A figure receding from the front to the back of the stage may be said to be ascending the scale, for when it is near the footlights its maximum detail will be observed, as the vibrations of a low note are more readily distinguished than those of a high note. As the figure moves back the details of its movement—arms, legs, feet—grow less noticeable until it finally attains the compactness of a silhouette. The same rules of choreographic perspective must be applied not only to stationary bodies but also to the actual choreographic rhythm of movement. If a choreographic phrase is to give the effect conceived by the choreographer, he must take into consideration the increased distance at which it will be viewed by the audience and accentuate each movement in proportion to that difference in distance.

The first thing to do, then, when an idea is in germ, is to decide whether music, décor, choreography or literature is to play the principal part in its generation, and then in which order of importance the others shall follow. When this order has been established a certain contrapuntal *rapprochement* will be seen between them. Since each of the elements composing the ballet has its individual counterpoint, they will be related by a counterpoint in three parts, one part of which will be intensified. It must then be carefully considered to which of the three parts—music, décor, and choreography—the different voices are to be apportioned, in order that the correct proportion may not be upset. Literature should not be looked upon as another part, but as one absorbed by each of the others.

I have used in these notes a musical terminology for the lack of a choreographical one, and have not attempted to give more than an indication of the method which I am employing in a larger work on which I am at present engaged. The fundamental fault in all previous attempts to find the correspondence between the three arts which make up a ballet, has been that the suggested relationship has been an arbitrary and theoretical one incapable of practice. This mistake was made both by Dalcroze and Scriabin. They tried to relate the three arts by the rules governing one of them, not realising that such rules must be new ones arising from a basis common to all three and which I have here called, for the sake of convenience, counterpoint.



# The Tent.

BY LIAM O'FLAHERTY.

A SUDDEN squall struck the tent. White glittering hailstones struck the shabby canvas with a wild noise. The tent shook and swayed slightly forward, dangling its tattered flaps. The pole creaked as it strained. A rent appeared near the top of the pole like a silver stream in the canvas. Water immediately trickled through the seam, making a dark blob.

A tinker and his two wives were sitting on a heap of straw in the tent, looking out through the entrance at the wild moor that stretched in front of it, with a snowcapped mountain peak rising like the tip of a cone over the ridge of the moor about two miles away. The three of them were smoking cigarettes in silence. It was evening, and they had pitched their tent for the night in a gravel pit on the side of the mountain road, crossing from one glen to another. Their donkey was tethered to the cart beside the tent.

When the squall came the tinker sat up with a start and looked at the pole. He stared at the seam in the canvas for several moments and then he nudged the two women and pointed upwards with a jerk of his nose. The women looked but nobody spoke. After a minute or so the tinker sighed and struggled to his feet.

"I'll throw a few sacks over the top," he said.

He picked up two brown sacks from the heap of blankets and clothes that were drying beside the brazier in the entrance and went out. The women never spoke, but kept on smoking.

The tinker kicked the donkey out of his way. The beast had stuck his hind quarters into the entrance of the tent as far as possible, in order to get the heat from the wood burning in the brazier. The donkey shrank away sideways still chewing a wisp of the hay which the tinker had stolen from a haggard the other side of the mountain. The tinker scrambled up the bank against which the tent was pitched. The bank was covered with rank grass into which yesterday's snow had melted in muddy cakes.

The top of the tent was only about eighteen inches above

## THE TENT

the bank. Beyond the bank there was a narrow rough road, with a thick copse of pine trees on the far side, within the wired fence of a demesne, but the force of the squall was so great that it swept through the trees and struck the top of the tent as violently as if it were standing exposed on the open moor. The tinker had to lean against the wind to prevent himself being carried away. He looked into the wind with wide open nostrils.

"It can't last," he said, throwing the two sacks over the tent, where there was a rent in the canvas. He then took a big needle from his jacket and put a few stitches in them.

He was about to jump down from the bank when somebody hailed him from the road. He looked up and saw a man approaching, with his head thrust forward against the wind. The tinker scowled and shrugged his shoulders. He waited until the man came up to him.

The stranger was a tall, sturdily built man, with a long face and firm jaws and great sombre dark eyes, a fighter's face. When he reached the tinker he stood erect with his feet together and his hands by his sides like a soldier. He was fairly well dressed, his face was clean and well shaved, and his hands were clean. There was a blue figure of something or other tattooed on the back of his right hand. He looked at the tinker frankly with his sombre dark eyes. Neither spoke for several moments.

"Good evening," the stranger said.

The tinker nodded without speaking. He was looking the stranger up and down, as if he were slightly afraid of this big, sturdy man, who was almost like a policeman or a soldier or somebody in authority. He looked at the man's boots especially. In spite of the muck of the roads, the melted snow and the hailstones, they were still fairly clean, and looked as if they were constantly polished.

"Travellin'?" he said at length.

"Eh," said the stranger, almost aggressively. "Oh! Yes, I'm lookin' for somewhere to shelter for the night."

The stranger glanced at the tent slowly and then looked back to the tinker again.

"Goin' far?" said the tinker.

"Don't know," said the stranger angrily. Then he almost

shouted : " I have no bloody place to go to . . . only the bloody roads."

" All right, brother," said the tinker, " come on."

He nodded towards the tent and jumped down into the pit. The stranger followed him, stepping carefully down to avoid soiling his clothes.

When he entered the tent after the tinker and saw the women he immediately took off his cap and said : " Good evening." The two women took their cigarettes from their mouths, smiled and nodded their heads.

The stranger looked about him cautiously and then sat down on a box to the side of the door near the brazier. He put his hands to the blaze and rubbed them. Almost immediately a slight steam rose from his clothes. The tinker handed him a cigarette, murmuring : " Smoke ? "

The stranger accepted the cigarette, lit it, and then looked at them. None of them were looking at him, so he " sized them up " carefully, looking at each suspiciously with his sombre dark eyes. The tinker was sitting on a box opposite him, leaning languidly backwards from his hips, a slim, tall, graceful man, with a beautiful head poised gracefully on a brown neck, and great black lashes falling down over his half-closed eyes, just like a woman. A womanish-looking fellow, with that sensuous grace in the languid pose of his body, which is found only among aristocrats and people who belong to a very small workless class, cut off from the mass of society, yet living at their expense. A young fellow with proud, contemptuous, closed lips and an arrogant expression in his slightly expanded nostrils. A silent fellow, blowing out cigarette smoke through his nostrils and gazing dreamily into the blaze of the wood fire. The two women were just like him in texture, both of them slatterns, dirty and unkempt, but with the same proud, arrogant contemptuous look in their beautiful brown faces. One was dark-haired and black eyed. She had rather a hard expression in her face and seemed very alert. The other woman was golden haired, with a very small head and finely-developed jaw, that stuck out level with her forehead. She was surpassingly beautiful, in spite of her ragged clothes and the foul condition of her hair, which was piled on her tiny skull in knotted heaps,



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uncombed. The perfect symmetry and delicacy of her limbs, her bust and her long throat that had tiny freckles in the white skin, made the stranger feel afraid of her, of her beauty and her presence in the tent.

"Tinkers," he said to himself. "Awful bloody people."

Then he turned to the tinker.

"Got any grub in the place . . . eh . . . mate?" he said brusquely, his thick lips rapping out every word firmly, like one accustomed to command inferiors. He hesitated before he added the word "mate," obviously disinclined to put himself on a level of human intercourse with the tinker.

The tinker nodded and turned to the dark-haired woman.

"Might as well have supper now, Kitty," he said softly.

The dark-haired woman rose immediately, and taking a blackened can that was full of water she put it on the brazier. The stranger watched her. Then he addressed the tinker again.

"This is a hell of a way to be, eh?" he said. "Stuck out on a mountain. Thought I'd make Roundwood to-night. How many miles is it from here?"

"Ten," said the tinker.

"Good God!" said the stranger.

Then he laughed, and putting his hand in his breast pocket, he pulled out a half pint bottle of whiskey.

"This is all I got left," he said, looking at the bottle.

The tinker immediately opened his eyes wide when he saw the bottle. The golden-haired woman sat up and looked at the stranger eagerly, opening her brown eyes wide and rolling her tongue in her cheek. The dark haired woman, rummaging in a box, also turned around to look. The stranger winked an eye and smiled.

"Always welcome," he said. "Eh? My curse on it anyway. Anybody got a corkscrew?"

The tinker took a knife from his pocket, pulled out a corkscrew from its side and handed it to the man. The man opened the bottle.

"Here," he said, handing the bottle to the tinker. "Pass it round. I suppose the women 'll have a drop."

The tinker took the bottle and whispered to the dark haired woman. She began to pass him mugs from the box.

"Funny thing," said the stranger, "when a man is broke

and hungry, he can get whiskey but he can't get grub. Met a man this morning in Dublin and he knew bloody well I was broke, but instead of asking me to have a meal, or giving me some money, he gave me that. I had it with me all along the road and I never opened it."

He threw the end of his cigarette out the entrance.

"Been drinkin' for three weeks, curse it," he said.

"Are ye belongin' to these parts?" murmured the tinker, pouring out the whiskey into the tin mugs.

"What's that?" said the man, again speaking angrily, as if he resented the question. Then he added: "No. Never been here in me life before. Question of goin' into the work-house or takin' to the roads. Got a job in Dublin yesterday. The men downed tools when they found I wasn't a member of the union. Thanks. Here's luck."

"Good health, sir," the women said.

The tinker nodded his head only, as he put his own mug to his lips and tasted it. The stranger drained his at a gulp.

"Ha," he said. "Drink up, girls. It's good stuff."

He winked at them. They smiled and sipped their whiskey.

"My name is Carney," said the stranger to the tinker. "What do they call you?"

"Byrne," said the tinker. "Joe Byrne."

"Hm! Byrne," said Carney. "Wicklows full o' Byrnes. Tinker I suppose?"

"Yes," murmured the tinker, blowing a cloud of cigarette smoke through his puckered lips. Carney shrugged his shoulders.

"Might as well," he said. "One thing is as good as another. Look at me. Sergeant-major in the army two months ago. Now I'm tramping the roads. That's boiling."

The dark-haired woman took the can off the fire. The other woman tossed off the remains of her whiskey and got to her feet to help with the meal. Carney shifted his box back farther out of the way and watched the golden-haired woman eagerly. When she moved about her figure was so tall that she had to stoop low in order to avoid the roof of the tent. She must have been six feet in height, and she wore high-heeled shoes which made her look taller.

"There is a woman for ye," thought Carney. "Must be a gentleman's daughter. Lots o' these shots out of a gun in

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the county Wicklow. Half the population is illegitimate. Awful bloody people, these tinkers. I suppose the two of them belong to this Joe. More like a woman than a man. Suppose he never did a stroke o' work in his life."

There was cold rabbit for supper, with tea and bread and butter. It was excellent tea, and it tasted all the sweeter on account of the storm outside which was still raging. Sitting around the brazier they could see the hailstones driving through a grey mist, sweeping the bleak black moor, and the cone-shaped peak of the mountain in the distance, with a whirling cloud of snow around it. The sky was rent here and there with a blue patch, showing through the blackness.

They ate the meal in silence. Then the women cleared it away. They didn't wash the mugs or plates, but put everything away, probably until morning. They sat down again after drawing out the straw, bed-shape, and putting the clothes on it that had been drying near the brazier. They all seemed to be in a good humour now with the whiskey and the food. Even the tinker's face had grown soft, and he kept puckering up his lips in a smile. He passed around cigarettes.

"Might as well finish that bottle," said Carney. "Bother the mugs. We can drink out the neck."

"Tastes sweeter that way," said the golden-haired woman, laughing thickly, as if she were slightly drunk. At the same time she looked at Carney with her lips open.

Carney winked at her. The tinker noticed the wink and the girl's smile. His face clouded and he closed his lips very tightly. Carney took a deep draught and passed him the bottle. The tinker nodded his head, took the bottle and put it to his lips.

"I'll have a stretch," said Carney. "I'm done in. Twenty miles since mornin'. Eh?"

He threw himself down on the clothes beside the yellow-haired woman. She smiled and looked at the tinker. The tinker paused with the bottle to his lips and looked at her through almost closed eyes savagely. He took the bottle from his lips and bared his white teeth. The golden-headed woman shrugged her shoulders and pouted. The dark-haired woman laughed aloud, stretched back with one arm under her head and the other stretched out towards the tinker.

"Sht," she whistled through her teeth. "Pass it along, Joe."

He handed her the bottle slowly, and as he gave it to her she clutched his hand and tried to pull him to her. But he tore his hand away, got up and walked out of the tent rapidly.

Carney had noticed nothing of this. He was lying close to the woman by his side. He could feel the softness of her beautiful body and the slight undulation of her soft side as she breathed. He became overpowered with desire for her and closed his eyes, as if to shut out the consciousness of the world and of the other people in the tent. Reaching down he seized her hand and pressed it. She answered the pressure. At the same time she turned to her companion and whispered :

"Where's he gone ?"

"I dunno. Rag out."

"What about ?"

"Phst."

"Give us a drop."

"Here ye are."

Carney heard the whispering, but he took no notice of it. He heard the golden-headed one drinking and then drawing a deep breath.

"Finished," she said, throwing the bottle to the floor. Then she laughed softly.

"I'm going out to see where he's gone," whispered the dark-haired one. She rose and passed out of the tent. Carney immediately turned around and tried to embrace the woman by his side. But she bared her teeth in a savage grin and pinioned his arms with a single movement.

"Didn't think I was strong," she said, putting her face close to his and grinning at him.

He looked at her seriously, surprised and still more excited.

"What ye goin' to do in Roundwood ?" she said.

"Lookin' for a job," he muttered thickly.

She smiled and rolled her tongue in her cheek.

"Stay here," she said.

He licked his lip and winked his right eye. "With you ?" She nodded.

"What about him ?" he said, nodding towards the door. She laughed silently. "Are ye afraid of Joe ?"



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He did not reply, but, making a sudden movement, he seized her around the body and pressed her to him. She did not resist, but began to laugh, and bared her teeth as she laughed. He tried to kiss her mouth, but she threw back her head and he kissed her cheek several times.

Then suddenly there was a hissing noise at the door. Carney sat up with a start. The tinker was standing in the entrance, stooping low, with his mouth open and his jaw twisted to the right, his two hands hanging loosely by his sides, with the fingers twitching. The dark-haired woman was standing behind him, peering over his shoulder. She was smiling.

Carney got to his feet, took a pace forward, and squared himself. He did not speak. The golden-headed woman uttered a loud peal of laughter, and, stretching out her arms, she lay flat on the bed, giggling.

"Come out here," hissed the tinker.

He stepped back. Carney shouted and rushed at him, jumping the brazier. The tinker stepped aside and struck Carney a terrible blow on the jaw as he passed him. Carney staggered against the bank and fell in a heap. The tinker jumped on him like a cat, striking him with his hands and feet all together. Carney roared: "Let me up, let me up. Fair play." But the tinker kept on beating him until at last he lay motionless at the bottom of the pit.

"Ha," said the tinker.

Then he picked up the prone body, as lightly as if it were an empty sack, and threw it to the top of the bank.

"Be off, you ——," he hissed.

Carney struggled to his feet on the top of the bank and looked at the three of them. They were all standing now in front of the tent, the two women grinning, the tinker scowling. Then he staggered onto the road, with his hands to his head.

"Good-bye, dearie," cried the golden-headed one.

Then she screamed. Carney looked behind and saw the tinker carrying her into the tent in his arms.

"God Almighty!" cried Carney, crossing himself.

Then he trudged away fearfully through the storm towards Roundwood.

"God Almighty!" he cried at every two yards. "God Almighty!"

# The Zeit Geist.

BY EDWIN MUIR.

**I**T has been a habit in criticism for some time to be concerned with the spirit of the age. Books are praised because they enshrine it, or condemned because they do not. No doubt this policy is a good one ; yet a considerable difficulty stands in the way of its practical application : that about the spirit of the age it is almost impossible to make an incontestable assertion. We do not know its attributes, nor how it operates and to what end, nor why it is what it is ; we only know that it is. We cannot tell in which of our contemporaries it is most essentially represented ; whether it is more in Mr. Lawrence than in Mr. Strachey, whether Miss Sitwell has it or Mr. Eliot, or whether Mr. Joyce is its true prophet. Regarding it romantically we might be tempted to think of it as a force of immense resources, but blind, which throws out parts of itself experimentally in various directions to discover in which it will find its greatest satisfaction.

Yet subjectively, in our experience, we feel it in quite a different way. We feel it as a thing pressing in upon us, a force against which we can never be prepared, for we do not know its strength, its attributes, or the means by which it operates. The writer will express these attributes in works of art, but he can never define them ; and when he tries to do so he will fall, as Mr. Lawrence has done in his didactic writings, into half-truth and unintelligibility. In any case he will not feel like a reed through which the spirit of the age blows ; that theory of the Zeit Geist will be refuted for him by his ever-present struggle to impose form upon his material.

When a force determining men's lives is indefinable, inescapable and overpowering, it will arouse hostility in those who realise its power, and this hostility will be the more intense the more complete the realisation. A man who apprehends the power of the age will regard himself as its enemy ; like Milton, Swift, Blake, Wordsworth, Shelley and a host of other

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writers, he will show a distaste almost grotesque for contemporary habitudes of thought. This hostility is in certain writers inevitable ; it is in effect a testing of the age by itself, an assaying process from which, its deceptions and fashion burned away, the age emerges in greater purity. For all great writers are of their time, though they generally think of themselves as outside and against it ; and when they attain expression in art the age is interrogating itself, is being differentiated for the purpose of self-realisation. Without this hostility against itself the spirit of no age could come to realisation ; it would remain undifferentiated and unawakened ; it could never be objectified, for all objectification implies separation.

And in the greater number of its writers the spirit of an age is never objectified. For though we find it hard to tolerate, the law of mediocrity holds in literature as in ordinary life ; the majority of writers accept fashion blindly, never feel the abnormal need to question, are either satisfied with things as they seem, or else are content with a mood of wonder which cannot goad them beyond itself. This is a fact neither to be astonished at nor deplored, but simply to be accepted as inevitable. Writers of this ineradicable order are not necessarily popular ; they may have a regard for art ; they are sometimes within their limitations sincere ; but their decisive limitation is that habitually they speak out of the Zeit Geist as if they were speaking in their sleep. All the thoughts, attitudes, phrases, techniques of the Zeit Geist crowd into their minds and emerge again with an individual twist, it is true, for personality can never be completely abnegated, but without a single fundamental question having been addressed to them. Works produced in this way are immediately understood by all those who are in the stream of the same Zeit Geist. They are understood as "Lalla Rookh" was at a time when Shelley was scarcely known at all, or where known was despised. This comprehension is complete and immediate because authors of this order never question the premises of the age, and because to question premises is always an unfamiliar and unwelcome process. What marks these writers is that they accept the spirit of the age both consciously and unconsciously ; their conscious is accordingly a mere passive reflection of a

general unconscious, and is incapable of being turned back into that unconscious, to discover and objectify what is there. They are mere expressions of the thing of which as artists they should be the contemplators. If they have enthusiasm it is not their enthusiasm, if disillusion, not their disillusion, if thoughts, not their thoughts. For these are manifestations of a literary fashion, and it is in the essential nature of fashion to blind us to its meaning and the causes from which it springs, to everything, in fact, except the inevitability of the conformity it demands.

There are two ways in which the writer may avoid being assimilated by the age ; one is by struggling with it, the other is by escape. Both imply an intense apprehension of the spirit of the age, and both are in greater or less measure salutary, for even by escape the writer maintains his personality intact. But it is he who wrestles with the age who finally justifies both it and himself ; for if it oppresses the writer the spirit of the age has also something of incalculable value to give him, which only by it can be given. It not only presents him with a new resistance, unlike that presented by any other period ; it gives him a new inspiration, once the resistance has been vitally pierced. If, ignoring his age, a writer turns to past literature for his stimulus, he will find that the resistance is not sufficient to evoke his full powers, that try as he may the urgency and immediacy which are the signs in art that a problem not merely chosen but destined has been faced, will remain absent from his work. In theory he may be apparently right ; he may justly hold that only what is permanent is great ; yet his orientation to the problem will be completely erroneous, for the good writer is not concerned with the things which in literature have been proved permanent, but rather with the things in his age and his experience which have not been so proved, to which by realising and objectifying them he may give permanence. What we recognise as the *Zeit Geist* of a past age is that part of it which in this way has been objectified. What we feel as the contemporary *Zeit Geist*, on the other hand, is a raw potentiality whose crystallisations in art are the less clearly recognisable by us the more completely we are under the influence of that potentiality. This blindness about itself is not peculiar to our age. It is the fate of every age of transi-



tion. To the intelligentsia a hundred years ago the spirit of the age was not represented by Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats and Shelley, but rather by Campbell, Moore, and *The Edinburgh Review*. It is true, the intelligentsia have no power over us as soon as the age which produced them has passed, but while they are contemporary they are the chief moulders of opinion, and have incalculable power, the infinite power of suggestion. In the modern world the power most solidly obnoxious to the artist is not the public but the intelligentsia.

The thesis that the writer who most completely expresses the spirit of the age is he who is consciously against it is less paradoxical when it is put in different terms ; and if it were said that to a sincere or original spirit life must always be more difficult than it is to the mediocre or the fashionable, the agreement would be general. It is the almost hypnotic power of suggestion which contemporary modes of thought, hopes, assumptions, desires—the Zeit Geist, in short—casts upon us, that prevents our admitting readily this particular application of a generally admitted truth. Nothing is more amazing in our time than the amiability of literary men towards one another. Dozens of intelligent critics have not scrupled to call Mr. de la Mare a great writer ; Mr. Chesterton has accorded the same title to Mr. Squire ; and Mr. Strachey, of all people, has bracketed Shakespeare and Mr. Eliot together, evidently as poets of the same quality. Politeness cannot account for such happenings ; it would be perfectly satisfied with the acknowledgment that Mr. de la Mare, Mr. Squire, and Mr. Eliot are writers of indubitable and acknowledged talent. The thing which, when we praise contemporaries, makes the praise involuntarily too high, is the genuine desire that they should be great, the necessity to see significance in our era, whether it is precisely where we are discovering it or not. Condemning a contemporary work, a critic can retain objectivity and measure, for he is not seeing it through the magnifying glass of his wishes ; but as soon as he begins to praise, he is carried away by his desires and his hopes, which are far greater than the object he is considering, and a modest virtue will make him believe that here is the fulfilment of all he has been unconsciously looking for. The illusions we have about contemporary literature are the measure of the power of the Zeit Geist, the Zeit Geist which can only continue

to exist by appearing to justify itself in effectual expression, and which will finally convince us, therefore, that the expression is effectual.

The illusions of his period no writer has been able to throw off completely, for they are knit with the period's desires, and with what makes the artist create. If in Shakespeare there is not so much of the illusion of the Elizabethan age as in Marlowe, the inescapable residue remains. If Wordsworth and Shelley said fewer than Southey of the things which the mobilised forces of their environment made it inconceivable that they should not say, they said enough to show where mass suggestion ended and poetry began. When, giving voice to revolutionary ideas outworn, even pedantic, to us now, they announced the immediate dawn of a new era, they were not poets, but manifestations of their time ; and it was only when, concerned with the further meaning of that ideology, they tried to find something within themselves to justify it, that they attained utterance true both to themselves and their era. In the creative writer's struggle with the illusions of his time there is a stage where the illusions become truth, where, no longer influences or assumptions, they are objectified as moments in the permanent experience of mankind. Yet it is the *Zeit Geist*, the mass of suggestion, desire and suffering of the time, which differentiates one literary period from another ; by presenting a new resistance it provokes a new response.

To indicate the points at which a true resistance has been faced in contemporary literature must be infinitely difficult. Yet certain things are tolerably clear. The difference in quality between Mr. Joyce's work and Mr. Huxley's is very suggestive. Superficial resemblances between these writers are many ; both are irreligious, both are disillusioned, both are ironical ; and the temper of the age is all three. Yet the difference between Mr. Joyce's *quality* and Mr. Huxley's is infinite. It may be indicated broadly by saying that while Mr. Huxley's disillusionment is a thing which, with trifling variations, may be found among half the writers in London and Paris, Mr. Joyce's may not. In reading Mr. Huxley we may, if we choose, assume his disillusionment, take it for granted as comfortably as we take any habitual assumption. But when disillusionment is objectified as it is in "Ulysses," we can no longer do this ;

we are compelled to reckon with it. We are not at liberty to adopt it as it stands; for this disillusionment is no longer an attitude, but rather all that an attitude by its nature hides and keeps us from seeing. To accept it is not thus to accept another disguise or defence; it is rather to accept in some measure ourselves. For its effect Mr. Huxley's work depends on the fact that we do tend to make the assumptions he makes; but once his mood is not accepted as self-evident, his irony becomes empty; we are left with a mere attitude, seductively presented, which has no grounds for existing save that it is the attitude of a great number of people who question it as little as Mr. Huxley does. This is to say that Mr. Huxley's novels, in spite of admirable qualities, a graceful style, wit, remarkable tact in avoiding the *bête*, belong to the literature of fashion. A change of mood would take half their appositeness from them. "Ulysses," on the other hand, depends very little for its comprehension on the mood which its readers take to it; for their floating disillusionment, half-conscious and vague, is there so profoundly grasped and completely objectified, that the general mood fades, evaporates, becomes unreal, beside it. We feel that this attitude has been radically modified, that henceforth it must become more real, or, if it persists unchanged, more unreal.

If Mr. Huxley is our best example of the fashionable writer, and Mr. Joyce of the artist expressing the age by an uncompromising opposition to it, there is another figure who is equally significant as a writer of escape. A great deal has been said against the literature of escape; but it is one of the types of literature, and it will continue to be written so long as writers, like other men, adapt themselves in different ways to the world. Blake's poetry was in sense a poetry of escape, and so was that of Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats; and it would be pedantic to deny that it has enriched experience. For escape is one way of saving oneself from being overwhelmed by the mass suggestion of the age, and of penetrating to a source of inspiration deeper than it. Mr. Lawrence is the grand example in our age of the poet of escape. He has scoured the globe to find some order of life sufficiently primitive to be the antithesis of contemporary Europe; and he has written violently against almost every modern form of thought and feeling. Yet in presenting

in his novels such a radical antithesis to all the age stands for, he has brought a profound criticism to bear upon it. His values, his symbols, his hopes, are so opposed at every point to the spirit of the age that he makes us question not one or two, but all of its assumptions. The defect of the literature of escape is that it is too sweeping ; it has neither the exactitude nor the practical temper of the literature of conflict. It postulates only two things : its vision of truth and beauty, and a world which does not correspond to that vision. Yet its criticism may be profound as far as it goes, for it apprehends the problem in its full and appalling form, though it can find no solution.

All the important writers of our time belong to these two categories. In some there is a divided allegiance, in Mr. Eliot most strikingly, who in his poetry sets side by side the response of the poet who desires to escape from his environment, and that of the critic of life who wishes to come to terms with it. Their rank as artists will be determined by the same thing which at present determines their value for us : the profundity, comprehensiveness and truth of their criticism of contemporary life.

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# The Reminiscences of Mme. F. M. Dostoevsky.

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN BY S. S. KOTELIANSKY.

DOSTOEVSKY EDITOR OF *The Grazhdanin*, 1872.

HAVING finished his novel, *The Devils*, Fiodor was very undecided as to what he should do next. He was so worn out by his work on it, and so dissatisfied with it, that it seemed to him wearisome to start at once on a new novel. To realise the idea which he had formed while we were living abroad, that is, to publish *The Journal of an Author*, as a monthly review, was out of the question. To meet the cost of the publication of the *Journal* and of the maintenance of our family (not to speak of the payment of debts) quite considerable sums would be needed, and there was also the question as to whether the *Journal* would be a success, and if so, how great that success would be, for it was intended to stand for something quite new, for something which up to that time had not been undertaken in literature, either in form or contents. And in case of failure, we should be placed in a desperate position.

Fiodor hesitated very much, and I cannot say what decision he would have made had not Prince P. Meschersky at that very time proposed to him to become editor of the weekly *Grazhdanin*. That journal had been founded a year ago under the editorship of G. Gradovsky. Concerned with *The Grazhdanin* were a few people of like views and convictions. Some of them, K. P. Pobedonoszev, T. I. Fillipov, N. N. Strakhov, A. N. Maikov, and E. Belov were sympathetic to Fiodor, and the idea of working with them appealed to him. No less pleased was he at the possibility of sharing with the readers the hopes and doubts that had been maturing in his mind and heart. In the pages of *The Grazhdanin* he could realise his idea of *The Journal of an Author*, although in a form different from the one it subsequently assumed. From the financial point of

view, the proposition was satisfactory ; the editor's salary was fixed at three thousand roubles ; for his articles entitled *The Journal of an Author*, as well as his political writings, he was to be paid separately. Altogether he would be getting about five thousand roubles a year. The monthly receipt of a definite sum of money had also the advantage of allowing Fiodor to devote himself to his work without having to tear himself away in order to find the means of subsistence—worries which acted most prejudicially on his mood. Yet in consenting to become editor of *The Grazhdanin* at the request of persons sympathetic to him, Fiodor did not conceal from them the fact that he was assuming the editorship only temporarily, as a respite from his literary work, and in order to get more intimately acquainted with current actualities. When the urge of creative work arose in him, he would give up an activity so uncongenial to his character.

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#### DOSTOEVSKY AS PUBLISHER, 1873.

One of the hopes we had for improving our financial affairs was the chance of selling the book rights first of *The Idiot*, and then of *The Devils*. While we were abroad, it was difficult to arrange the matter, and it did not greatly improve on our return to Russia (in 1871), when we had the opportunity of carrying on personal negotiations with the publishers. By every publisher to whom we turned we were offered a very unprofitable price ; thus, for instance, for the book rights of 2,000 copies of *The Eternal Husband* we had been paid 150 roubles, and for the book rights of *The Devils* we were offered 500 roubles, to be paid in instalments spread over three years.

Even when he was young Fiodor dreamt of being his own publisher ; he also talked of it while we were living abroad. I, too, became interested in the idea, and gradually tried to learn the conditions of book publishing and distribution.

When we told our friends and acquaintances of our intention to publish the book ourselves, we had to listen to many objections. They advised us not to undertake a thing which we did not understand, which, through our inexperience, would only ruin us, and would add to our old debts some thousands of roubles. But these dissuasions had no influence on us, and we made up our minds to realise our idea. We bought paper

## REMINISCENCES OF MME. F. M. DOSTOEVSKY

from the firm of A. I. Vargunin, the best paper manufacturer of that time ; and on the advice of N. N. Strakhov, we gave the printing order to Panteleyev Brothers. November and December of 1872 and part of January, 1873, were spent on getting out the book. I read one set of proofs, Fiodor read his own set, and I went through his corrections, transferred them to my copy, and read the proofs again so as to avoid misprints.

About the 20th of January, 1873, the book was ready, and a certain number of copies was delivered at our house. Fiodor was satisfied with the appearance of the book, and as for myself, I was quite charmed. Before the publication of the book, Fiodor took it to one of the big booksellers, with whom he had been having dealings for many years, in the hope that the latter would wish to order a certain number of copies. " Well, send us two hundred copies on commission," the bookseller said. " What discount ? " Fiodor asked. " Not less than fifty per cent.," was the answer. Fiodor made no reply. He returned home worried, and told me of his failure. I too was upset, for the bookseller's proposition to take two hundred copies on commission did not at all please me. I knew that, even if he sold the copies, it would be two or three years before we got the money from him.

Then there arrived the momentous day of our life. On January 22, 1873, there appeared announcements in the papers of our publication of *The Devils*, and early in the morning there arrived a messenger from M. V. Popov, the bookseller, who, contrary to the custom of the trade, used to buy all new publications. I came out into the hall and asked the man who had sent him and what he wanted ? " We saw your announcement," he said, " so I should like to take ten *Devils*." I got out the copies, and with some agitation I said : " The price is 35 roubles, the discount is 20 per cent., so you have to pay me 28 roubles." " Why such a small discount ? Can't you make it 30 per cent. ? " the man asked. " No, I cannot." " Well, 25 per cent. ? " " Really, no," I said, but in my own mind I was very uneasy ; suppose he were to go away, and I missed my first customer ? " Well, if you cannot, then here is the money," and he handed me the 28 roubles. I was so glad that I gave him 30 copecks for a cab. A little later a boy came from

a bookshop which supplied the provinces, and bought ten copies ; he also, after some bargaining, agreed to the 20 per cent. discount. A man from Glasunov's came and said he would take twenty-five copies if I gave him a discount of 25 per cent. In view of the big order, I had to give it him. Someone else called for copies. About midday there appeared a dashing assistant from the bookseller whom Fiodor had previously gone to see, and said that he had come to take away two hundred copies on a commission basis. Encouraged by the success of the first sales, I said that I did not sell copies on commission, only for cash. "But Mr. Dostoevsky," he said, "promised to let us have them." I said that Mr. Dostoevsky had published the book, but I, his wife, looked after the sales, and that many booksellers had already bought copies for cash. "May I see Mr. Dostoevsky himself?" the assistant persisted, evidently reckoning on my husband's yielding the point. "Mr. Doestoevsky worked all night, and I am not going to wake him before two o'clock." The assistant suggested that I should let him have the two hundred copies, and "we will pay Mr. Dostoevsky later." I remained firm, and telling him what discount we were allowing, and on what number of copies, I said that only five hundred copies had been delivered to us, and that I expected to sell them that day. The assistant went away, but an hour later another assistant, less assured, arrived and bought fifty copies for cash at a 30 per cent. discount.

That day I was impatient for Fiodor to wake up, so much did I want to boast of the success of our sales. I may add, by the way, that when he woke, Fiodor was always ill-tempered and disagreeable, and did not like to be talked to or to be asked anything at that hour. It was only after he had completed his toilet, had drunk a glass of very hot coffee, and gone into his study, that I was allowed to go to him to tell him all the news, pleasant and unpleasant, which had occurred since the previous night. During those hours, Fiodor was always in the pleasantest mood : everything interested him, he inquired about all sorts of things, called in the children, played and sported with them. So it was this time too. After he had talked to the children, I sent them off on some errand to the nursery, and myself sat down in my habitual place by the desk. Seeing that



I kept silent, Fiodor glanced at me mockingly and asked : " Well, Anechka, how is our trade ? " " It is getting on fine," I replied in the same tone. " And you have surely succeeded already in selling one copy ? " " Not one, but one hundred and fifteen," I said. " Indeed ? . . . Well, I congratulate you ! " Fiodor continued in a bantering tone, thinking that I was joking. " But, am I not telling you," I said with annoyance, " why don't you believe me ? " and I got out of my pocket the list of copies sold, together with a pile of notes, about 300 roubles. As Fiodor knew that we had only very little money in the house, the amount I showed him convinced him that I was not joking. After four o'clock, the bell started ringing again ; new customers appeared. *The Devils* had had a great success when it was running as a serial in the *Russky Vestnik*, and now there appeared to be a number of people who wanted to have the novel in book form ; and the booksellers who bought copies in the morning sent again for fresh supplies. I was more triumphant than ever, especially seeing that Fiodor was greatly interested in the success of the book, and that he was very glad. But how great was my triumph when that day, about seven o'clock in the evening, Kozhanchikov, the bookseller, came to us and wanted us to sell him three hundred copies for bills, at a discount of only 30 per cent., saying that any bank would take his bills. Fiodor came to discuss the matter with me. Having no idea what bills were, I advised Fiodor to invite Kozhanchikov to tea and to have a talk with him. Meanwhile, I took a cab and went to the printers, who lived close to us, to ask their advice. Fortunately, I found one of the Panteleyevs and he told me not to lose such a big order ; he assured me that Kozhanchikov's bills could readily be discounted, and he even agreed to take the bills in payment of our debt at the printing office. With that information I came home, and Kozhanchikov, an experienced tradesman who always carried with him stamped blanks for bills, immediately issued three bills for 735 roubles, and Fiodor gave him a note to the printers for the corresponding number of copies.

In a word, our publishing activity started brilliantly, and the first three thousand copies were sold before the year was out. The sale of the remaining five hundred copies dragged on for a while, for we ceased to advertise the book.

## A FEW DATA CONCERNING DOSTOEVSKY'S WORKS.

*The Life of a Great Sinner.*

In the winter of 1869-1870 Fiodor Mikhailovich was engaged in composing the plan of a new novel which he meant to call *The Life of a Great Sinner*. My husband's idea was that the work should consist of five long books, each book forming an independent novel, to be published serially or in book form. In all five novels Fiodor intended to deal with the important and tormenting problem of the existence of God, the problem which tormented him all his life long. The action of the first novel was to take place in the forties of the nineteenth century. The materials and the types of that period were so clear and familiar to Fiodor that he could have written that novel even while remaining abroad. That novel Fiodor thought of publishing in Strakhov's *Zarya*. But for the writing of the second novel, the action of which was to take place in a monastery, Fiodor considered it essential to return to Russia. In that second novel he intended to present the venerable Tikhon Zadonsky as the chief character—of course, under a different name. Fiodor placed great hopes on his projected work, and regarded it as the culmination of his literary activity. But this anticipation was realised only later on, for many characters of his planned novel were included afterwards in *The Brothers Karamasov*. But at that time (1869-1870) my husband did not succeed in realising his intention, for he was carried away by another theme. "On the thing which I am now writing for the *Russky Vestnik*," he writes to Strakhov, "I rely very much—not as a work of art, but as an expression of a tendency: I want to express certain ideas, if even my artistry perishes in the task; for I am carried away by what has been accumulating in my mind and in my heart; suppose it even turns out a mere pamphlet, yet I shall have spoken out my mind."

*The Devils* (*The Possessed* in the English translation).

That was his novel *The Devils*, which appeared in 1871. The arrival of my brother had a certain influence on its origins. The point is that Fiodor, who read various foreign papers (which printed a great deal of information, not allowed to be made public in Russia) came to the conclusion that very shortly

## REMINISCENCES OF MME. F. M. DOSTOEVSKY

political agitations were bound to take place in the Petrovsky Academy of Agriculture. Fearing that my brother, owing to his youth and unformed character, might take an active part in the movement, my husband advised my mother to invite him to spend the summer vacations with us in Dresden. This invitation Fiodor meant as a pleasure both to myself and to my mother, who had lived the last two years abroad, and missed her son very much. My brother accordingly came to us for the summer vacations. Fiodor, who was very fond of him, was interested in his studies, in his friends, and generally in the life and the movements among the students. My brother told him everything, and with enthusiasm. It was then that Fiodor conceived the idea of describing in one of his novels the political movement of that period, and as one of his chief characters, he took the student Ivanov (called Shatov in *The Devils*), who was subsequently killed by Nechayev. My brother spoke of Ivanov as a man of sense and of strong character, who had radically changed his former convictions. And how very distressed my husband was when he afterwards learnt from the papers of the murder of Ivanov, for whom he had conceived a sincere sympathy. The Academy park and the grotto where Ivanov's murder took place are described by Fiodor from the account given by my brother.

Although the material for the new novel was taken from actual life, Fiodor found it extraordinarily difficult to write the novel. As usual, he was dissatisfied with his work, he re-wrote it many times, and destroyed fifteen folios of one version of it. A novel with a tendency evidently was not in keeping with his creative activity.

In Fiodor's notebook, under the date of December 24, 1877, there is the following entry :

*Memento. For my whole life.*

(1) To write a Russian "Candide."

(2) To write a book on Jesus Christ.

(3) To write my reminiscences.

(4) To write a poem on the Commemoration of the Dead.

(All these, except my last novel and the intended publication of my "Journal of an Author," will take me at least ten years of work, and I am fifty-six now.)

*(To be Concluded.)*

# Notes and Reviews.

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## Notes on Music.

### (II)—SOME RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

THE festival of modern music at Venice last month, given under the auspices of the International Music Society, affords a good opportunity for a short survey, or stock-taking, of contemporary activities, as revealed in the recently published works of the leading composers of the day.

Amongst the most interesting of all are those of Arnold Schönberg, who, after a long silence of nearly ten years, has published four new works in rapid succession, namely: A set of five piano pieces (Op. 23), a Serenade for the strange combination of clarinet, bass-clarinet, mandoline, guitar, violin, viola, 'cello, and bass voice (Op. 24), a Suite for piano (Op. 25), and a Quintet for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon (Op. 26). The Serenade was performed at Venice, and, it is interesting to learn, was received with warm applause, at which Schönberg seemed somewhat taken aback. He certainly had every reason to be, for it is truly astonishing how this composer, after about twenty years of unrelenting hostility and abuse directed at him from all sides, has come at last to be accepted as a master—astonishing because it is impossible to say that the average, or even exceptional, music-lover is any nearer to appreciating Schönberg's music now than he was twenty years ago. This result has been achieved, not by the merits or demerits of his work, but by sheer force of personality. It is literally a *succès d'estime*, a personal triumph of the highest order. Even his bitterest antagonists are no longer able to withhold their admiration from an artist who has given such proofs of his spiritual integrity; who, through twenty years of ridicule and abuse, to say nothing of material difficulties, has never deviated one hairbreadth from the course which he had traced out for himself.

But while welcoming this tardy recognition of one of the most vital personalities in modern art, it is impossible to ignore the fact that his influence on the younger generation of contemporary musicians has been, and will probably continue to be, a very dangerous and even a very pernicious one. Schönberg is, in fact, the Mallarmé of music, but with this difference, that while the latter lacks virility and true creative power, Schönberg has titanic strength and immense vitality. Hence the danger, for if a spineless



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schoolmaster such as Mallarmé can do the harm he did to a whole generation of French poets, what is likely to be the outcome of the influence of Schönberg, possessing a hundred times Mallarmé's power, upon young composers with only one hundredth part of the intelligence of their poetic colleagues?

In short, it is possible to entertain the greatest admiration and sympathy for Schönberg's personality, and for a great part of his achievement as well, and yet fear that he may prove to be a veritable Old Man of the Sea to such as are foolish enough to allow him to settle on their shoulders. He certainly seems so far to have effectively strangled the creative faculties of all who have come under his influence. No Sinbad has yet escaped to tell the tale.

His latest phase, as exemplified in the works mentioned above, is a very curious one. Imagine that Mallarmé, after having, in his previous works, thrown overboard every traditional element of technique and expression, such as punctuation, rhyme and metre, had attempted to apply the personal technique thus arrived at to the exploitation of the most rigid and primitive forms, equivalent to the sonnet, ballade and triolet; you will then have some idea of what Schönberg has done in his piano suite and the Serenade. The strictness of such forms as the Minuet, Gigue, March and so forth, only serve to accentuate the frequently baffling obscurity of his idiom. In his masterpiece, "Pierrot Lunaire," such methods were remarkably successful, on account of the parodistic intention underlying them. In the present works, however, there is no such intention, and the resultant impression is one of the wildest perversity allied to the utmost pedantry. The wind quintet, on the other hand, with its freer form and comparative simplicity of texture, makes a very sympathetic impression—particularly the third movement, which reveals a lyricism which has been lacking in most of Schönberg's recent work.

After his alarming encounter with the Old Man of the Sea, Sinbad, it may be remembered, travelled to the City of Monkeys, so-called on account of the prodigious quantity of animals of that species which dwelt there. Similarly, after leaving Schönberg, it is only natural that we turn our attention to the Franco-Russian school of music, centred in Paris, of whom the acknowledged leader—the Great Mandrill with the blue-and-orange-coloured rump—is Igor Stravinsky. In a recent survey of contemporary music the present writer said of this composer that in his later works he had merely been following the example of the Cubist painters: that after their sudden and dramatic return to representational methods and classical ideals the chances were that Stravinsky would follow their example, and revert to some kind of expressionism by way of the classical forms. And so it has happened. In his Piano Sonata one encounters a curious blend of Bach and early Beethoven which it would be too charitable to ascribe to any satiric intention, and in the Octet for wind instruments a similar attempt to apply

Bach's polyphonic method to modern harmony. The result has only been to prove conclusively what one has already said, that "whatever direction he turns in, it will not enable him to write good music in the future, any more than it has helped him to do so in the past." His French disciples, such as Auric, Poulenc, and Milhaud, seem in the meanwhile to have supplanted him in the affections of M. Diaghilev, and to have written the music for several of the latest productions of the Russian ballet ; but while his *Petrouchka*, *Sacre du Printemps*, and *Oiseau de Feu* provide quite a pleasant evening's entertainment, all the exquisite artistry of the dancers and the striking *mise-en-scène* which has been lavished on their productions are unable to disguise the hollow emptiness of the music. Stravinsky may not be able to hold our attention outside the theatre ; they cannot even hold it inside.

The third prominent figure in modern music, namely, Béla Bartók, seems to have published very little of recent years. Apart from the charming, though very slight, Roumanian Dances for small orchestra, we know only the larger Dance Suite, performed last month at one of the Promenade Concerts. Though hardly comparing in significance with his works in a more restricted medium, such as the string quartets and sonatas for violin and piano, it is nevertheless a very striking and brilliant score which serves to strengthen one's conviction that Bartók is one of the two or three composers living whose work is of genuine importance.

Another of them is Bernard van Dieren, nine of whose songs have just been published by the Oxford University Press. Selected somewhat at random from a large output, they may at first sight seem to present a bewildering diversity of method. Five of the songs are English, with texts by Shakespeare, Shelley, Skelton, King James the First of Scotland, and an anonymous Elizabethan poet ; three are French, to poems of Victor Hugo and Boileau ; and Germany is represented by a setting of a lyric by Mörike. These poems in three different languages are not utilised by the composer as so many pretexts for making music ; his attitude towards a poem is not, like that of so many composers of songs, the same as that of a dog towards a lamp-post. His settings are all characterised by a most scrupulous regard for the exact accentuation of each syllable of the text, as well as for the thought or emotion expressed in it. At the same time he has been able to avoid the faults which are generally attendant upon such deference to the poet's intentions. His voice parts are never a mere declamation, or heightened recitation without melodic beauty, neither does he work from line to line of the poem, but conceives the song as a whole. More than any living composer van Dieren seems to have struck the perfect balance between the conflicting interests of poet and musician.

Despite the seeming diversity of treatment in these songs, dictated by their widely varying moods and enhanced by the accentual peculiarities of the different languages, they nevertheless

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possess in common that fundamental quality which can only be called personality—a personality which is not in the least concealed or impaired by the composer's momentary assumption of the mentality of the particular poet whose poem is being set. There is no other composer of the present day except Schönberg whose work is so immediately recognisable, so impossible to mistake for that of anyone else. Yet this originality is not achieved, as that of Schönberg generally is, by the deliberate avoidance of traditional procedures. Van Dieren's music is based upon the same principles as those which underlie the finest music of the past.

Beautiful though these songs are, it would be a mistake to assume that they represent van Dieren's most significant work. Although he is an accomplished miniaturist, his greatest strength lies in works on a larger scale, such as the string quartets, and various chamber compositions for different combinations of solo instruments. It is to be hoped that the Oxford Press will see its way to publishing some of these important works at an early date.

CECIL GRAY.

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### Cinema : The Gold Rush.

THERE has not been a new Chaplin film for two years, though *The Woman of Paris* was produced by the comedian during that interval. He himself merely flashed through it in a seven-seconds character-study, the very essence of all French railway porters. The drama was not of a kind to make anyone entertain very certain hopes for the next true Chaplin comedy because, while it was an historically important development of film-direction and film acting, it was towards the end almost maudlin. One feared—particularly after reading Chaplin's own account of his post-war European trip—an ineradicable sentimentality in his nature which threatened to externalise itself. And since his last comedy *The Pilgrim* appeared, other comedians like Harold Lloyd and the much cleverer Keaton had been gaining ground. Finally, a week before *The Gold Rush* opened at the Tivoli, Strand, a new figure appeared in W. C. Fields, the Micawber-like hero of *Sally of the Sawdust*. Fields is not, like Chaplin and the other cinema-comics, a clown. He is the true music-hall comedian who develops comedy of character, not that of stylised gestures and deliberately created mannerisms. It was consequently with some fears that one entered the Tivoli to see *The Gold Rush*. Individually and in mass, we are all fond of Chaplin, and it would be sad to see him decline either in talent or popularity.

He has done neither. Not only is it extremely difficult to get a seat to see *The Gold Rush*, but the immense audiences there three times a day respond to Chaplin as they do to nothing else on earth.

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As to his talent, it has developed very considerably along certain lines and abated nowhere. Though he does not use pantomime so purely as he did in the David and Goliath sermon in *The Pilgrim*, though he is not so exquisitely fantastical as he was in an old film—I forget the title—where he piped on a daisy and executed a little classical dance, *The Gold Rush* is the most Chaplinesque, and most likeable piece he has made. He has re-created his old original self in shapeless boots, polite bowler raised from the back, little stick and semi-passable second-hand clothes. But it is an infinitely more resourceful, more spiritual, more profound Charlie than the little mannikin of ten years ago who captured the children's fancy first and then became a universal symbol. Chaplin the director has for the first time fully realised the potentialities of Chaplin the comedian, has given him a new kind of world to move in and deepened his meaning vastly. In all the other comedies the little figure has moved in a comic world of villains, policemen, mothers-in-law, naughty children and curates. The custard pie was imminent in the atmosphere, except here and there in his other masterpiece *The Kid*. But in *The Gold Rush* Chaplin acts in a non-comic world, the ordinary world of Alaskan film-drama with its fur-coated miners, flash houris, mining camps and snow. The subsidiary characters are ordinary characters out of cinedrama, not out of low comedy. And against this familiar background Chaplin's brave, battered little figure takes on its real meaning. He is the individual trying to come to terms with society: this is true of his impish as well as his pathetic moments.

The framework is simple enough: a penniless little man from the cities turns up in the middle of a gold-mining camp during a rush period. He falls in love with a cabaret girl to whom he is a figure of fun, is jockeyed by fate into untold riches, and just as accidentally wins the girl. But the detail is infinitely rich. Charlie is very hungry: he has heard that when men are found frozen in the arctic snows they are, with luck, rescued by kind strangers and warmed and fed. So he lies down and looks as frozen as possible outside a hut. When the inmate finds him and tries to drag him indoors Charlie shams frozen so conscientiously that his "corpse" will not even bend at the waist. When his rescuer insists on walking him up and down the hut instead of feeding him, he is most distressed, probably not having heard that this also is a necessary part of the prescribed treatment. Finally, he is put in a chair, his little stick which is playing frozen too, wrenched from his stiff hand, and a cup of hot coffee placed to his lips. A flicker of animation—he pushes the cup aside. He likes sugar in his coffee. After selecting two lumps from a bowl on the table and stirring the drink vigorously, he reassumes his calculated invalidism. The whole "lost in the snow" incident is brilliantly comic, but that there should be all-human flaws in his ingenious plan is the something extra, the compelling expansiveness of



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genius. And this is only one of the many amiably superfluous delights. Chaplin's own sentimentality has not got the better of Chaplin the artist's discrimination and the pathos is not laboured overmuch. It was again a proof of his perfect taste that he preceded the difficult scene of his desertion by his lady-love with a sharply contrasted one, in which he imagines himself to be entertaining his guests brilliantly. If Chaplin had never done anything but demonstrate that unique solo-dance "The Oceana Roll" he would still be unforgettable. Indescribable, this *tour de force*, and absolutely unrivalled on stage, screen, or even in circus and marionette shows for delicacy and dexterity and pure delight in the works of man.

Part of *The Gold Rush* has been cut: the gaps are not very perceptible but they are regrettable, and I notice that some of the photographs hung up in the Tivoli lobby are rather cruelly and tantalisingly taken from the excerpted portions. These, of course, may have been omitted by Chaplin himself: they probably were. But it would be nice if they could somehow be made available, at any rate to enthusiasts, some day. And the film is not a bit too long. The only flaw in it is the chicken metamorphosis, which for dramatic necessity cannot be omitted. We can readily forgive its incomplete success for the sake of the Boiling of the Boot which it introduces. One's only serious regret is that one cannot somehow see the whole of Chaplin's past work, even if it took a week of one's life, right from the anonymous days of Sennett comedies, through the Essanay period of *The Perfect Lady*, the war-time *Shoulder Arms* and *A Dog's Life*, up to *The Kid* and *The Pilgrim*, and then see *The Gold Rush* through again three times more to appreciate fully the immense wealth of detailed work it enshrines. It is, by proof, much more enjoyable the second time than the first.

IRIS BARRY.

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### Keats and Mr. Murry.

KEATS AND SHAKESPEARE. By J. MIDDLETON MURRY.  
Oxford University Press. 14s.

MR. MIDDLETON MURRY is one of the few modern critics who occasionally let themselves go, writing passionately and without shame. And he has in general a good historic judgment, which also is a rare gift. It is therefore the greatest of pities that when Mr. Murry does get really ecstatic and transported, he cannot take his historic judgment along with him. Not that we have any objection to unhistoric criticism on its own account; it is usually diverting and frequently impressive; but it is Mr. Murry's misfortune that in these moods his style alternates (like a tailor's dun)

between servility and pomposity, and that the blush which he denies himself often reddens the cheek of his reader. His adulation of Keats and Shakespeare is sincere, but if deification is necessary, both poets would be better suited with a high-priest of airier humour and lighter touch. See Mr. Murry sweeping away with a wave of his quill every advance that aesthetic psychology has made since the time of Keats; suggesting that because Keats mentioned in an early letter about his relations with women, 'the Gordian complication of his feelings' (which, says Mr. Murry, is a better phrase than the jargon 'complex') he therefore had "forgotten as much psychology as the most advanced psycho-analyst ever knew!" Mr. Murry's fastidious objection to 'complex' which, after all, like the word 'suffix,' is formed regularly enough from a Latin verbal noun, is probably a sop to the 'anti-psychology' audience, to which this book, as a series of University lectures, was first addressed. But it is qualified, when his enthusiasm reasserts itself, by a reference to the workings of Keats' *deep unconscious* mind, as opposed to his consciousness. To distinguish two different workings of thought as the conscious and the unconscious is most barbaric jargon. How an unconscious mind can be a mind at all, I fail to see: probably Mr. Murry intends by 'unconscious mind' a form of consciousness of whose existence the logical grammatic higher-level mind is usually unconscious. And if forgetting what the advanced psychologist has been at pains to discover and report is a virtue, Mr. Murry is in this respect at least more virtuous than his two heroes, who being born too soon, could give no proof of their power to forget.

In *Keats and Shakespeare*, Mr. Murry has had an interesting theme, the history of Keats' relationship with Shakespeare as revealed in his poems and letters. Keats seems from the first to have been aware of the affinity of his own mind with Shakespeare's, and to have studied walking as nearly as possible in what he understood to be the steps of his master; even playing with the idea of direct personal inspiration from Shakespeare's spirit. Mr. Murry brings out well enough Keats' drunken enchantment with the Sea on his adventurous visit to the Isle of Wight in the spring of 1817, his intense haunting of mind at that time by the famous passage in *King Lear*:—"Hark, do you hear the Sea?" the consequent increase of his deep awe of Shakespeare, the sleepless nights he spend pondering on the "end and aim of Poetry," under the double spell of Sea and Shakespeare: and the way that all this excitement crystallised into his sonnet on the Sea:—

It keeps eternal whisperings around  
Desolate shores . . .

which is as much a eulogy on Poetry in general, and Shakespeare in particular, as on the Sea. The result of these meditations on the end and aim of Poetry was the definite acceptance of Shakespeare

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as the ideal by which all other poets were to be measured and found wanting. What he singled out for admiration were Shakespeare's

"Negative Capability, that is, when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason," and "that intensity which causes all disagreeables to evaporate, from their being in close relationship with beauty and truth."

Against Shakespeare, then, he set up and demolished the Wordsworthian type of poet, the "egotistical sublime," whose work was positive in expression of a certain philosophy uncongenial to Keats, and of single-strand argument, as opposed to the tangled intensity of Shakespeare's statement and counter-statement. This power of multiple vision, acknowledged as a common feature in the mechanism of the fantastic dream, is rare in written poetry, and that Keats shared it in a peculiar degree with Shakespeare is one of their chief points of similarity. Mr. Murry emphasises a passage in a letter written in September, 1818, during the illness of Tom Keats, to Reynolds, who was getting married :

"Believe me I have rather rejoiced at your happiness than fretted at your silence. Indeed, I am grieved on your account that I am not at the same time happy. . . . I never was in love, yet the voice and shape of a Woman have haunted me these two days, at such a time when the relief, the feverous relief of Poetry seems a much less crime. . . . There is an awful warmth about my heart like a load of Immortality. Poor Tom—that woman—and Poetry were ringing changes in my senses."

Mr. Murry's comment is that the last sentence gives

"the whole truth of Keats' condition. The poetry (which was the abstract images of the first *Hyperion*) was the refuge of his conscious mind from Tom's suffering and his suffering for Tom : 'that woman' was the refuge of his unconscious and instinctive being."

Now, a year or two ago, I ventured to give as a notable case of Keats' multiple vision, *La Belle Dame sans Merci*. Keats wrote this poem at the end of the same winter ; Tom was dead, and he was suffering himself more intensely than ever ; he could not write poetry, he was seriously ill since his tour in Scotland, and in love, at last, but with a woman who dominated and laughed at him. I suggested almost in the words of this letter to Reynolds, though somehow I had missed the passage, that the Merciless Lady was the result of changes rung on poor Tom, a woman and poetry. The woman was no longer Jane Cox, as in September, but merciless Fanny Brawne : poor Tom's face now threatened Keats with a horrible and merciless death like his own, and Poetry, who had flattered him so long, seemed now to be mercilessly denying herself to him. Mr. Murry, reviewing these suggestions of mine with the heaviness he reserves for literary lightweights (and how unctuous he is towards the heavyweight!) remarked that they might be true, or they might not, but what had they to do with the pure milk in the pure coconut of Poetry ? or words more pedagogic to the same effect.

But to return to Keats and Shakespeare. Keats soon developed

this ideal of Negative Capability to one of 'diligent indolence,' so that in February, 1818, he urges Reynolds, "*Let us not therefore go hurrying about and collecting honey, bee-like buzzing here and there impatiently from a knowledge of what is to be aimed at, but let us open our leaves like a flower and be passive and receptive,*" but the public failure of *Endymion*, which is a monument to this negative policy of letting things happen in verse, provoked the more positive *Hyperion*: at the composition of which Milton temporarily dethroned Shakespeare as the ideal poet. Another cause of this change of masters was that Keats, while admiring Shakespeare's naturalness and receptivity, could not at this time make terms, as Shakespeare had done, with the crowd. Already by the end of 1818 he was in a state of such nervous sensitivity that he constantly complained how the "identity" of people "pressed upon" him, and he was adopting a defensive policy of self-insulation against the claims of life. In this state Poetry became a region of escape and freedom, a lofty region of angelic hierarchies and comfortable abstractions, well defended against invasion of the "chopped hands and sweaty night-caps" of a Shakespearean stage-rabble.

But the mood broke in the autumn of 1819, when Keats abandoned *Hyperion*, already twice-written and returned to his idealisation of Shakespeare. He wrote:

"There were too many Miltonic inversions in it." . . . "Miltonic verse cannot be written but as the verse of art. I wish to devote myself to another verse alone. It may be interesting to you to pick out some lines from *Hyperion* and put a mark † to the false beauty proceeding from art, and one ‖ to the true voice of feeling."

The practical sequel was a decision not to be any longer "the pet lamb in a sentimental farce," but a man of affairs giving the crowd stare for stare, and jostle for jostle; he would even write for hire. He had already turned on himself and begun a parody on his own poetry of escape—*The Cap and Bells*. Mr. Murry regards this return to Shakespeare as a great spiritual triumph. I can't believe it, though I'd like to be able to do so. Keats had allowed himself to be broken by an impossible passion for Fanny Brawne, and now sought consolation in the thought that Shakespeare had been similarly shipwrecked. Mr. Murry writes:

"Keats cried in his pain, 'Withhold no atom's atom, or I die.' Fanny Brawne withheld many atoms and Keats did die. She is not to be blamed. She could not understand Keats' passion. . . . It seems mankind is divided into those who understand love of that kind and those who do not. Between the two classes of men there is a great gulf fixed. . . . Keats' life as a poet was over. He submitted himself to life and life accepted the sacrifice. He returned to Shakespeare and drank the same bitter cup to the very dregs. . . . his own poetic silence is the measure of the completeness of that return."

With all respect to Keats, Mr. Murry and Shakespeare, a love that makes impossible or distasteful demands on the one loved is no love at all; and an overreaching after a poetic ideal that finally means suicide is in itself an ugly thing; not for blame, but certainly not for glorification in Mr. Murry's rather threadbare Biblical



imagery. And in any case Shakespeare, though lamed and scalded, survived as a poet the tragedy of the sonnets, and regained his self-respect. In the same context Mr. Murry makes an even more fantastic comment :

" Keats' words when he rejected Milton were ' Life to him would be death to me.' Was it not almost death to Milton himself? Compare *Samson Agonistes* with *The Tempest*. The difference between them is between a dead art and a living one : between a poetry of which the inward springs are petrified, and pure poetry, that remains obedient to the fullness of life within."

We do not need Mr. Murry's assurance that *The Tempest* is highly concentrated poetry, but *Samson Agonistes* starved by the " petrification of an inward spring " ! Crikey !

ROBERT GRAVES.

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### Thought and No-thought.

VOICES OF THE STONES. By A. E. Macmillan. 3s. 6d.

A POETRY RECITAL. By JAMES STEPHENS. Macmillan. 3s. 6d.

The admirers of A. E.'s poetry would perhaps condone its insensibility to the contemporary atmosphere (which some consider the very breath of a revitalised poetry) and point to the readiness and consistence with which it deals with the questions of all time,

" The mystic heaven, and earth within,  
Plain as the sea and sky."

To many readers poetry is a handmaid of philosophy, whose wanton graces are excusable in as far as they insinuate into men's bosoms the precepts, albeit adulterated, of her great but homely mistress. The verse form is one of the attractive guises in which the Absolute of Prose Thought sees fit to take flesh. Samuel Smiles, sound though he be, labours under distressing personal disadvantages when vying with Martin Tupper for an immediate appeal to the senses : on the other hand, Mr. Alfred Noyes, whose non-stop epic reduces to a pretty reasonable allowance the poetic seductions which characterise past efforts in that line, does nevertheless attempt methods of ingratiating that Dr. Frank Crane could not condescend to. This attitude to poetry was perhaps more widespread in the past, and it was more plausible then ; for in our time the processes of Prose Thought have been finally tabulated, the autonomy of philosophy upset, and the main burden of the mystery thrown on the subconscious mind, the legitimate source of art. In positivistic ages " didactic " poetry is accepted as the highest expression of blended intelligence and sensibility : at a time like our own, when definable ideas are not related to any generally recognised scheme of values, the first quality of " pure " poetry (a phrase implying a belief in poetry's " absolute " possibilities) is indefinable content. It seems more than likely that Art, from this point of view, is only a fresh opportunity for superstition, and that

the secrets of æsthetics will in time be reduced to the same level as the hypotheses of philosophy. But there is no longer any justification for the opinion that Poetic Thought is a qualified rendering of truths that can be more precisely apprehended in another way.

If A. E.'s philosophy gives an impression of integrity, his use of verse does not. His mind is really alien to poetry, especially to the Irish convention which he adopts. His imaginative world is one in which everything is realised as *statement*—a mystical world infinitely simpler than Swedenborg's, but quite as fixed and factual. His verse seems to be an endeavour to impart this structural vision in terms of *metaphor* of which it has no need. The test of mystical verse, by which the nineteenth-century tradition betrays itself, is the style of Herbert. The minor poets of the Oxford Books of Victorian and Mystical Verse are, for the most part, expressing conceptions which are of the same order as Herbert's, though by no means of the same quality. Their real chance of fulfilment in poetry was an abdication, appropriately more extreme than Herbert's, of all technical devices made current by poets whose minds set no limitations on their range of expression. Milton's prose-personality may have suggested voluntary restrictions similar to Herbert's, but his poetic vitality overbore them. Herbert is the supreme example in our poetry of triumphant humility, of conscious fitness; his best poems, like the best early Flemish paintings, owe their unique attractiveness to an acute self-knowledge. He was as true in his poetry as in his religion: realising that his religion was largely a prose conception, he gave to poetry only those portions which were adaptable to it. The nineteenth-century mystical poets, with whom A. E. is directly affiliated, show no such respect for the art. Their religion was, far more than Herbert's, a prose conception, yet their verse idiom is a flamboyant ritual of demoded bardic, a clumsy and distasteful attempt to camouflage a jelly of dissolving abstract ideas with the strong substances and colours of a stolen vision. A. E. has his own vision; the proof of it is in his prose books. But he does not scruple to use verse as a means to an end which, intellectually and emotionally, has clearly been determined without the aid of poetic experience.

The suns that rise, the suns that set,  
Time's tidal waves of blue and gold  
That roll from far ethereal seas,  
Hill-land and forest, starlit pool,  
Are images we soon forget,  
And swiftest when most beautiful.  
For when most beautiful we feel  
That there is something they reveal,  
Some lordlier being of their kind;  
And beauty only meaneth this  
And to the symbol we are blind.

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The idea here expressed may help to explain the way in which it is expressed. A. E. is very much the big *vates* and avid of "symbol"; but "beauty," particularity, fundamental perception he pick-pockets, with listless virtuosity, from the unprotected energy of past poets. Everyone is aware of the gulf between propriety of personality and æsthetic propriety—a chasm that confounds the popular desire for an alliance between art and ethics. The relation between art and æsthetics is at present scarcely more intimate, since æstheticians have been unable to disclose the possibly autonomous logic of poetry which shows up as worthless poets many contemporary writers of undeniable literary ability.

"A Poetry Recital" is a very different matter. Mr. Wyndham Lewis, following a well-known Egyptologist, has argued that Art was born in the tombs. If we are to judge of its condition by Mr. Stephens's latest volume of verse, it dies in the nursery.

In the last and most contemplative poem in the volume, this couplet occurs :

What is knowing, 'tis to see :  
What is feeling, 'tis to be.

M. Julien Benda would hardly find a more explicit expression of the dominating distrust of reason and detachment which he detects in the activities of our time. Reason and detachment, it is true, are prose categories, states of mind proved helpful solely in regard to Prose Thought, they have no constant value for poets, witness Verlaine, who with an infantile prose-personality produced a poetry incalculably more mature than Dr. Johnson's. But Verlaine lived harmoniously in his double nature, without flight or mendacity, like the old patient Titan with his loins in mist, head in the sun. Mr. Stephens's case can be politely explained only by association. One is reminded of the cleverly veiled "cradle act" of Gertrude Lawrence and Beatrice Lillie—and of Hugo's family gathering who, "Lorsque l'enfant paraît," compete with the poet, all of them, "les plus tristes fronts, *les plus souillés peut-être*," in a senile scramble to share its "innocence."

BERTRAM HIGGINS.

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AUSTRALIAN TOTEMISM : A PSYCHO-ANALYTIC STUDY IN ANTHROPOLOGY. By GÉZA RÓHEIM, Ph.D. Allen and Unwin. 35s.

The works of the older school of anthropologists affect the reader like an excellent travel film. Indeed, no travel film is comparable to "The Golden Bough" as a pictorial and emotional representation of the beings separated from us by time as well as by space. Yet if the meaning for the savage of the complicated and often painful ceremonies to which he so earnestly devotes himself was often brilliantly exposed, their relation to the living phenomena of

higher cultures remained obscure. This was necessarily so until psychology had constructed an instrument sensitive to the actual movements of the mind, and the method of psycho-analysis provided this instrument. The perception of the similarity between the (so-called) Unconscious of the civilised adult and the savage or child mind was a great step in the direction of the association of psychology and anthropology. The fact that totems, with the corresponding taboos, are instruments of repression will naturally give rise, at least in the mind of a Freud, to the hypothesis that the behaviour of a savage under a system of taboo will resemble that of a civilised person under the repressive influence of a neurosis. As the clues to the real thoughts of the neurotic are looked for in the person's dreams and in any fixed forms of irrational behaviour (ceremonial), so those of the savage will be looked for in his myths (where the real content can effectually escape censor in fantastic forms) and in his ritual (that is, those performances which have for motive an end not naturally that of the means employed). The most remarkable fruit of this identification of the contemporary Unconscious with the archaic mentality was Freud's "Totem and Taboo," a work to which, as to that of Sir James Frazer, Dr. Róheim fully declares his indebtedness. "Totem and Taboo" gave a theoretical interpretation to the bewildering mental system revealed in "Totemism and Exogamy."

"Australian Totemism" brings such a mass of facts into line with Freud's main theory (and, in addition, many fine developments of the author's own) that it will require nothing short of a synthetic genius to suggest any other equally valid arrangement of the material.

The explanation of taboo as an incest-inhibition is, of course, with its corollary, the identification of the totem-animal with the "father" of the tribe, the essential fact on which the further analysis proceeds. In the days when the human group was organised as one male with his mate and offspring, the young males were prohibited from intercourse with any of the females. This is the original form of the Œdipus-complex (though psychologically the impulse may be analysed not as a desire to possess the mother, but to return to the state of pre-natal omnipotence). The resulting struggle of the generations, in which the sire was killed, was followed by a sudden realisation of the deed done and fear of his revenge. So, Dr. Róheim says, an interval was created between the sinful deed and the enjoyment of its fruits. In this interval, occupied with ever more elaborate precautions against the revenge of the sire, we recognise the earliest form of religion.

This seems a slight foundation for such a prodigious structure, but it receives remarkable reinforcement from the great many myths of the aborigines which are given here. (These myths, it may be emphasised, were taken down by travellers who had never



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heard of the Œdipus-complex.) In one of the most startling we actually see the sire (the grey kangaroo) pursued by the young males, at first condensed in the symbol of Lakalia, but afterwards appearing in their real form :—

“A big grey kangaroo lived at a place near Finke George. . . . There came one day from the west a man belonging to the totem of the Grey Kangaroo who was called Lakalia (the Pursuer) ; and he came to kill the grey kangaroo with a big stick. The kangaroo ran away, hotly pursued by the kangaroo man, who tried to kill it with his pointing-stick, but the kangaroo quietly turned round and looked his pursuer in the face. . . . It ran on to the east, and everywhere where it stopped to feed or sleep there is a totem-centre at the present day. At last it came to Tanginta (Ironwood-tree place), where a rukuta (a young man after circumcision who must keep hidden) noticed the kangaroo and tried to stop its flight. The rukuta threw a stick at the kangaroo but missed it : the animal charged and squeezed the rukuta so that he remained there in a helpless state with broken bones. Lakalia came up and dressed his wounds. The kangaroo met a lot of women, stopped, and wanted to lie down there, but the women compelled him to continue his flight. He came to Tjuntula where there were many rukuta. One of them stood in the way of the animal and broke the kangaroo's leg with a stick. Then all the young men united to kill the kangaroo and take the Churinga (symbol of potency) from his head. They could not move the corpse when wanting to roast it ; Lakalia, who had arrived in the meantime, managed this with ease. After consuming the flesh it re-appeared on the bones and was cut off a second time.”

This sacramental feast, followed by a resurrection, is completed by a sort of apotheosis of both pursuer and kangaroo. Such a vivid re-creation of the past is comparable to the reconstruction of extinct animals from fossil-bones, but even more far-reaching in its significance.

The chapter on Intichuima ceremonies (superficially fertility rites, but with much underlying psychological meaning) is particularly rich in general ideas, and, in fact, the whole book gives evidence of a very powerful conception of the nature of the savage mental life to which it is impossible to do justice in a review. The author's suggestion that the use of stone cairns in many parts of the world to mark places where persons met violent or unlawful death, grew up out of the stones which the young males flung at the parent (*vide* the anthropoids' use of missiles), is an illuminating detail ; especially the analogy he draws with the stoning of Hermes by Zeus for the murder of Argos (Zeus-of-the-night-sky) which enabled him to obtain Io. The legends of the soul's journey to the other world are also essentially interesting, as they reproduce the struggle with the father, and also tend to verify the theory that the root-impulse of the Unconscious is the return to the condition of foetal bliss.

So much must suffice to indicate that Dr. Róheim has produced a book fascinating for the general reader ; that it will rouse the combative instincts of the scholars goes without saying. Yet it is very far from being a work of mere speculation. It is imaginative ;

that is to say, the material is arranged in a significant structure and not merely amassed. To such work, so finely carried out, literature itself may legitimately look for the direction in which to apply its new but so far unorientated impulses.

E. R.

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THE SAILOR'S RETURN. By DAVID GARNETT. Chatto and Windus. 6s.

Invention, of theme or character, is at once the measure and opportunity of a talent, a critical commonplace exemplified, as others, rarely enough for Mr. Garnett's first book to attract immediate and exceptional notice on this account; so rarely, indeed, as to induce considerable public interest in the discovery that work of artistic merit should share the artistic peculiarity of "meaning more than it says," if we may judge by the review notices appended at the end of "The Sailor's Return." And, indeed, the capacity both for invention and its artistic exploitation displayed in "Lady into Fox" seemed as good a preservative guarantee for a genuine, if restricted talent, as could be expected. The inventive faculty of "A Man in the Zoo" was in no way inferior, and sufficient to carry an evident uncertainty of purpose to a satisfactory conclusion in spite of itself. It is plausible, therefore, to attribute the failure of Mr. Garnett's new book to the inherent weakness of the story he has chosen this time to narrate. Since invention, however, is as little a matter of luck as execution, such statements have little meaning, and the immediate explanation, so far as this goes, is probably to be found in its customary place: demand and supply.

The motive of Mr. Garnett's talent is a concentrated illustration of successive stages in an *éducation sentimentale*, a subject demanding, more than others, objective presentation; and his solution of the problem in his first book was ingenious and successful, comprising the invention of a suitable fable, and the adoption of a prose similarly unrelated to contemporary reality. The latter expedient indeed, was a means of surmounting a more general difficulty of present imaginative literature, dealt with by Mr. Joyce, for example, in a somewhat different manner. The criterion of artistic means is success, and in "Lady into Fox" Mr. Garnett undoubtedly justified his method. But the weakness of an artificial solution of a permanent problem is that unless completely successful the result is worse than disastrous, it is nothing, and the prose of "The Sailor's Return" is in fact non-existent, that is to say, it is written in six or seven different manners, reminiscent, among others, of Mr. Garnett himself, of Mr. George Moore, of Captain Marryat, of Mr. T. F. Powys, and of the anonymous contemporary novel. The dialogue in particular employs a variety of style that is as astonishing as it is unconvincing. When Mr. Garnett remembers to use his own manner, he is momentarily liable to an archness

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more winning in its historical three-volume setting than in a contemporary writer of integrity. Signs of this unhappy selecticism were already apparent in "A Man in the Zoo," which showed, however, sufficient inventive and narrative ability to justify the supposition that Mr. Garnett's style would naturally resolve itself with the development of his talent. Of such ability "The Sailor's Return" contains very little trace. The theme itself, which concerns the inconvenience and danger of setting up house in England with a negress for wife, is unsuitable for Mr. Garnett's purpose and introduces difficulties he has previously avoided. The choice of circumstances not only possible, but of no infrequent occurrence in life, provokes realistic considerations incompatible with his conception, and this initial mistake involves him in most of the weaknesses of the book. Even so, it is surprising that a writer, well acquainted with the necessities of narrative should have devoted so many pages to retarding its course. The process of the seasons, tillage and harvesting, the song of the birds, the coming of the cuckoo, the knowledgeable innkeeper, Mr. Garnett knows and describes them all, down to parlour games and the manufacture of sloe gin, providing material for a complete country calendar. It might be possible to justify these pages, since it is possible to justify anything, even the two long descriptions of life in Central Africa which either a mistaken sense of providing background or the author's interest in this country has led him to insert, even, perhaps, the conclusion of the catastrophe, which is quoted in that hope:—The hero, Mr. Targett, a sailor turned innkeeper, has met with foul play in a fight outside his inn, where he now lies in bed upstairs. He owns a parrot, a prompt and sensitive bird, brought back with him from his travels:—

The doctor came downstairs, and without saying a word went out of the house. . . . The boy sat silent for another five minutes till the door opened softly and Mrs. Clall put her head into the bar. "Doctor says he cannot last through the night," she said. The parrot scraped in its cage.

"Time, gentlemen, please. Time," it said feebly.

But in fact Mr. Garnett's artistic integrity has in this book collapsed with his vitality. The spasmodic functioning of his rare and admirable narrative gift serves only to demonstrate its general paralysis, and since the story is without aesthetic life, its implications are at once too personal, too obvious, and too generalised. Indeed, it would not be worth criticising at length, had not Mr. Garnett elsewhere written work of literary value, for while fatigue may be responsible for a dull book, and a crisis of development for a confused one, the timely parrot dwells, with the last ray of the setting sun, in regions unexplored by literature.

J. F. HOLMS.



DOSTOEVSKY. Translated from the French of ANDRÉ GIDE.

With an Introduction by ARNOLD BENNETT. Dent, 6s.

M. André Gide is Dostoevsky's prophet to the French. One can hardly imagine a more difficult, a more whimsically interesting task than this attempt to mediate between French culture and the Russian genius in its purest state. The influence of Dostoevsky at the present time is a reliable guide to the spiritual ethnology of Europe—provided the observer understands the nature, while he notes the extent of the influence. In Germany, since the Revolution, Dostoevsky has been a best-seller, his influence extending beyond the novel to the drama and poetry, not to mention sociological thought. In England his success-of-esteem was early, and still surpasses that of any other foreign writer. M. Gide himself has had recourse, in many instances, to Mrs. Constance Garnett's admirable translations. Dostoevsky's reputation in Soviet Russia, so far as can be judged from native reports in Continental reviews, is undergoing a natural and, one cannot but believe, a temporary hold-up. Representative novelists such as Boris Pilniack and the Ivanovs, poets of *ad hoc* inspiration like Maïakovsky, are unanimous we are told, in their disaffection for the "artificial" torments of Dostoevsky. The subject-matter of these writers is true to their experiences of hunger, fear, battle and brutal love, and literature with them enters on one of those periods of rawness from which it may emerge exhausted or revitalised. A curious incident of this movement, of which news is so contradictory, is the official Institute of Poetry at Moscow, where three hundred pupils are taught to write. Its former Director was Valery Brussov, the symbolist poet, who announced, after the first examinations had been held: "This event fills me with awe and wonder. My pupils have all written perfect poems."

The first section of M. Gide's book, "Dostoevsky in his Correspondence," reads rather obviously; it was written in 1908. The rest consists of a series of addresses delivered in the early months of 1922 before M. Jacques Copeau's School of Dramatic Art at the *Vieux-Colombier*. M. Gide is mainly occupied with Dostoevsky's religious and social ideas, insisting throughout on their general antagonism to the French tradition. His most luminous observations come from this comparison; indeed, his book is not so much a study of Dostoevsky as an eclectic commentary on his peculiar significance for France. The apparent formlessness of the novel is contrasted with the exaggerated passion of French novelists for arbitrary outlines and inclusiveness in the delineation of character. Balzac is instanced, and a suggestive generalisation made to distinguish the ethics of the two writers:

"With Balzac (as invariably in Western society, in French especially, to which his novels hold a mirror) two factors are active which in Dostoevsky practically do not exist: first, the intellect, second, the will. . . . Dostoevsky's characters



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are one and all cut from the same cloth. Pride and humility ! these hidden reagents never change, although by graduating the doses of them we obtain reactions that are infinitely rich and minutely varied in colour."

M. Gide sets off the Asiatic extremism of Dostoevsky's Christianity against the opportunism and compromise of Western Catholicism ; the idea is not new, but he gives it a fresh interest by driving it to its logical conclusion—renunciation of personality. By doing so, however, he complicates a later statement about Dostoevsky's acceptance of the doctrine of energy—"the wild love of life we come across again and again in his works, love of life and all the world, Blake's vast delectable world wherein dwell the tiger and the lamb." Confronted in his last chapter with this apparent anomaly, M. Gide shows signs of embarrassment. The deadlock would not have arisen if, instead of appreciating Dostoevsky exclusively as thinker, he had dealt with him primarily as artist.

B. H.

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## Among New Books

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ALONG THE ROAD. Notes and Essays of a Tourist. By ALDOUS HUXLEY. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

There was a time when Mr. Huxley was something of the *enfant terrible*. Whether or not this was a misapprehension of the timid-minded, in this volume he shows himself unreservedly on the side of the angels. It is in the manner of the perfect conversationalist. The reader is subjected to a rapid stream of interesting little impressions of, and comments on, places and works of art, and of those whimsical anecdotes of the humours of travel with which the descendants of the Vikings love to regale themselves. In other words, in these essays, Mr. Huxley is content to be unambitious. He is evidently, from certain remarks, in an irritable state of reaction against such reflections of modern thought as psycho-analysis, "Ulysses" and abstract painting. The fruit of that reaction has yet to be gathered ; here it leads to a rather surprising crop of platitude.

These essays are at their best when Mr. Huxley is describing some concrete object, a picture, a palace, or the outskirts of a town, for he has the faculty of sharply visualising whatever he is writing about. His prose is then at its best. Our general impression, though, is that Mr. Huxley has not yet quite made up his mind about what he does value as essential in his impressions, that is in life, and whilst that is so, his comment, clear and intelligent though it is, will not carry the warmth of conviction which is as necessary to an essay as to a long work.

HENRY THOREAU. By LÉON BAZALGETTE. Translated by VAN WYCK BROOKS. Jonathan Cape, 12s. 6d.

Biography offers a great opportunity to the writer who wishes to express emotions so thick and confused as to repel other forms. In this book facts are as hard to come by as needles in a haystack : it provides instead a gushing appreciation of Thoreau, though on what grounds is not made clear. His writings, except for a very few quotations, are left out of the question. Everyone is called by his Christian name : Wal is loosed for a few char-

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acteristic pages of bluff and splendid vitality ; Williams, Johns, Horaces, and even Waldo, skip about in the intimacy of a personal record. The style of the book fits closely to its matter, though how closely Mr. Brooks has translated the original I do not know. This is an example : "One day young Edmund Sewall took his place in the boat—Edmund who was so like his big sister Ellen of whom John and Henry were particularly fond . . . and when the girl came to Concord to see them, gay parties were organised and they had beautiful evenings at home. Ellen's fresh seventeen years had made an impression on the two brothers. But it was the lovable John especially who made an impression on her." This would seem to be the language of parody rather than of biography.

THE SMOKING LEG. By JOHN METCALFE. Jarrolds. 7s. 6d. net.

Mr. Metcalfe's principal ingredient is Terror. "He seemed to feel the imminence of some obscene and ghostly happening, the sudden menace of some deadly peril . . ." Again, ". . . down a gloomy passage at the end of which waited a great Fear. By a thousand hints he had felt it drawing near, insidious and bland."

Purely as entertainment, his stories are good value, for he has a lively and ingenious invention and a knack of rapid and telling narrative. Moreover, he appears to realise the limitations of his medium, and has the tact, as a rule, to refrain from imposing on his stories more meaning than they can bear. Occasionally, however, he neglects to confine himself strictly to an appeal to the reader's primitive fear of the darkness that surrounds daily life and supplements his assault on the nerves with character-drawing or psychological explanation. His failure is then regrettably immediate, for he has no imagination or sense of character whatever.

And Mr. Metcalfe does not always remember the necessity for giving his fictions strange settings. Verisimilitude at the beginning of stories that end in such highly improbable ways is essential if the reader's intelligence is to be safely passed. Though folk in the neighbourhood of the docks may talk and behave as he describes, we know from experience that in Pimlico pubs, they do not.

SILHOUETTES. By SIR EDMUND GOSSE, C.B. Heinemann. 8s. 6d.

These forty-one chapters are reprinted from the *Sunday Times*, to which Sir Edmund Gosse contributes each week his opinion of a contemporary book. Judging from "Silhouettes," he but rarely discusses the creative work of the day, but confines himself to a chat on dead personalities, reprints, and criticism. His judgments are guarded, courteous, and often entertaining, but, since no subject is treated fully, it is for the incidental literary gossip that the book should be read. It is noticeable that for Claudian, Banville, George Moore, and Laclos there is a similar proportion of reprimand and praise. This non-combatant attitude to criticism is always sure of appreciation when it is upheld by such erudition, but it is of little value to those for whom literature is a more immediate part of existence.